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**'THE ARTISTRY OF JOHN:
The Fourth Gospel as Narrative Christology.'**

by Mark Stibbe, MA.

**Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. May 1989.'**



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

The present work is an attempt to apply the insights gained from my first degree in English literature to the fourth gospel. Therefore I should like to acknowledge my gratitude to two English teachers who have taught me the principles of literary theory and criticism and who have inspired me by their enthusiasm: to the late Trevor Park of Winchester College and to Dr. Eric Griffiths of Trinity College, Cambridge I extend warm thanks. I should like to pay tribute to my father, Philip Stibbe, at this point as well. Being brought up in a house full of books in the company of a man who had been taught by C.S. Lewis has made a profound impression upon me. My love of story, which is everywhere evident in this present work, owes much to the times when I sat as a child listening to my father reading out the Chronicles of Narnia, THE LORD OF THE RINGS and other works.

This is not only a work of literary (or, more properly, *narrative*) criticism, it is also a work of Johannine research. I should also therefore like to express my gratitude to those who have taught me at the University of Nottingham. I am grateful to Professor Heywood Thomas for his constant encouragement and insightful comments on matters of philosophy, and I am especially grateful to Dr. John Muddiman, my supervisor. He has been a friend as well as an extremely penetrating commentator on my work, and I have always benefited from his sensitive criticisms. Dr. Andrew Lincoln, who taught me at St. John's Theological College, Nottingham (now of the Department of Biblical Studies at Sheffield University), is also somebody from whose expertise I have benefited greatly. Andrew's own professional interest in the literary approach to the New Testament encouraged me to persevere in a country where traditional, historical approaches to the Bible still dominate the biblical critical scene.

I should like to thank Canon Michael Austin, Southwell Diocesan Director of Education, for his considerable financial and intellectual support during this project. As a fellow Johannine scholar, Michael has been to me a kindred spirit as well as a brother in orders. Another "brother in orders" I should like to thank is my vicar, the Reverend Charles Hall. The momentum in this thesis was only maintained because Charles urged me to continue my academic pursuits as an outside interest.

Most of all I should like to thank my family for their unceasing support and constructive nagging to get this present work completed. It has not been easy writing this thesis whilst doing the more-than full-time job of a parish priest. Much of the work for this PhD has been done on holidays when I should have been spending time with my family and, particularly, with my wife Alie. I could never have completed this work without her loving support and gentle persuasion. This work is dedicated to her, with deep affection and lifelong gratitude.

PREFACE.

The translation used in the present thesis is Raymond Brown's and it can be found in his two-volumed commentary on JOHN in the Anchor Bible series. I have used Brown's translation simply because I deem it the clearest and most accurate available at present.

The Greek New Testament used in this thesis is the one edited by Kurt Aland et.al for the United Bible Societies. All Greek words in this thesis are, however, printed with English rather than with Greek letters. The reason for this is simply that the whole work has been done using the Amstrad PCW8512 computer. Whilst more recent models incorporate a locoscript containing the complete Greek alphabet, the locoscript which I have been using only contains 2/3 of the Greek alphabet. Rather than print out half of a Greek word and draw the rest, I have enhanced the aesthetic appearance of the text by printing Greek words with English letters.

ABSTRACT.

The present work has two aims. The first aim is to introduce the method of narrative criticism to New Testament scholars and we attempt to do this in Part One. Narrative criticism of the Bible has been practised since the early 1980's, but since that time no one has established the nature and the aims of the method. This thesis is the first work to define what a comprehensive narrative-critical approach to the gospels might entail. It is also the first work to include historical concerns in the narrative-critical programme. The examples of narrative criticism we do have in New Testament studies all assume that narrative criticism *must* be an a-historical method. We point out the fallacy of this view by drawing attention to the recent sociological studies of the narrative form and to the narrative history debate in History Faculties during the 1960's and 1970's. These two movements in scholarship necessitate an historical dimension to narrative criticism if the narrative form is not to be greatly restricted and over-simplified.

In Part One we provide an apology for narrative criticism and we show how future Johannine scholars might examine JOHN as narrative Christology (chapter one), narrative performance (chapter two), community narrative (chapter three) and narrative history (chapter four). In Part Two we provide an illustration of the method at work. Taking the Johannine passion narrative as our text (John 18-19), we show how this part of JOHN might be examined as narrative Christology (chapter five), narrative performance (chapter six), community narrative (chapter seven) and narrative history (chapter eight). This thesis is the first to expose these chapters to a thorough and rigorous literary approach. Our analysis reveals that the fourth evangelist has constructed his passion story with great artistry. We draw particular attention to narrative echo-effects, characterization, tragic mood, the reader's response of "home-coming" and time-shapes in John 18-19. These, and many other narrative strategies, contribute towards the classic, disclosing power of JOHN's story of the death of Jesus.

INTRODUCTION.

In 1981 David Tracy published his book, *THE ANALOGICAL IMAGINATION*¹. Tracy's aim in this work was to show how Christianity could still articulate a genuine claim to religious truth in a culture containing many competing religious traditions. Tracy attempted this by taking the notion of the "classic" from the world of literary theory and applying it to the Bible. A classic, as far as Tracy is concerned, is a text which discloses such a compelling truth about our lives that we are forced into giving it some kind of normative status. Shakespeare's *KING LEAR* can be deemed a "classic" because it surprises, challenges and shocks us out of conventional ways of seeing reality and leads us into a recognizable disclosure of a more essential and endurable reality. According to Tracy, biblical narratives have this effect as well, and because of this fact they too should be described and studied as "classics". Biblical narratives are classic narratives because they have "a disclosing power"². As such it is important for New Testament (henceforth NT) scholars to start analyzing and appreciating the narrative form of the Christian revelation if the public Tracy has in mind is to see Christianity as normative. Tracy argues that a new appreciation of the narrative form of much of the NT is vital if society, academic institutions and the church are to appreciate the "classic" nature of Christian truth. As Tracy says of the gospels, "When we approach these confessing narratives as narratives, therefore, with the aid of literary-critical methods, we can begin to sense their fuller religious and existential significance"³.

This thesis is really an extended footnote to that sentiment because here we are concerned with the method of narrative criticism and with the fourth gospel as narrative Christology⁴. In this thesis I aim to

answer Tracy's plea for a form of biblical criticism which can experience and elucidate the classic, disclosing power of the narrative form in the Bible. I fully agree with Tracy that a new appreciation of the narrative form of much of the Christian revelation will be at least one way in which Christian truth can be reclaimed by the three publics of society, academy and church. A large part of the Old Testament and well over half of the NT is "story" and story has a way of communicating meanings which systematic theology does not and cannot have. Stories, to use Tracy's word, are "public" discourse. Everybody listens to stories, everybody learns from stories. As Roland Barthes has expressed it, "nowhere is nor has been a people without narrative. All classes, all human groups, have their narratives, enjoyment of which is very often shared by men with different, even opposing, cultural backgrounds". A narrative does not depend on the cultural level of its consumer for its appreciation and enjoyment. That is why "narrative is international, transhistorical, transcultural"⁵. In the final analysis, narrative is a catholic phenomenon, both in the sense that it is to be found everywhere, and in the sense that it is appreciated by everyone. It is because narrative discourse is such a catholic language that NT scholars have to learn to reclaim NT narrative in the arena of biblical criticism.

Tracy published his book at a time when Paul Ricoeur (of the same Divinity School in Chicago) was constructing a three volumed work on narrative⁶, and when some American structuralists and literary critics were beginning to look at the gospels and Acts as narratives. I have provided a brief bibliographical guide to these emergent narrative-critical approaches to the NT in my opening chapters, but a comment about these approaches needs to be made at this introductory stage if the innovative aspect of my dissertation is to be appreciated. With very few exceptions, all the

narrative-critical studies of the gospels and Acts have proceeded on the assumption that NT narratives can be read as self-contained stories and not as historical texts. What I mean is this: narrative criticism has advocated a text-immanent study of the final form of NT narratives and has rejected any consideration of their life-history prior to textualization. This means that questions of source, historicity and sociological function (the questions asked by more traditional methods of biblical criticism) have been by-passed in favour of a method which ignores extrinsic factors. Narrative critics have justified this omission on the grounds that historical criticism of the Bible has peeled away the skin and flesh of NT narratives and left us with a mere core of Jesus' sayings and actions'. Historical criticism has been so preoccupied with what lies BEHIND NT narrative that it has destroyed what lies IN FRONT of it. The question I want to ask is this: even if traditional methods of biblical criticism have indeed distracted us from the literary qualities of NT narrative, is it right to omit historical questions and to treat NT narratives as self-contained narrative worlds with no reference to the real world ?

David Tracy was well aware of the explosion of interest in narrative in literary criticism and theology when he wrote THE ANALOGICAL IMAGINATION. His comments about this new interest were generally positive but he did voice a few cautionary statements to NT scholars about this tendency to treat NT narratives as if they were self-contained fictions. Whilst applauding the narrative critics of the NT because they were unwittingly exposing the source of the NT's "classic" power, Tracy also identified seven areas of concern in a footnote. He wrote that future narrative critics of the NT would: 1) need to work out what relevance structuralist understandings of mythical and fictional narrative have in NT studies (given that NT narrative is neither myth nor fiction); 2) they

would need to work out the relationship between human experience and the narrative form, and would then need to ask what kind of experience is being narrated in the gospels and Acts; 3) they would need to discuss whether historians impose a narrative form on past events or discover a story-like character within them, and whether the four evangelists have imposed or discovered a story-like form in their Jesus-traditions; 4) they would need to work out the differences and similarities between fictional and historical narratives, and decide whether the gospels and Acts are historiography or fiction-writing; 5) they would need to work out how important narrative is as a genre, and whether it is the most important genre in the Bible; 6) they would need to ask which particular narrative form in the Bible (e.g. miracle story, parable, passion narrative) demands primary attention; 7) they would need to ask what functions NT narrative had when it was originally composed².

Tracy's warnings to NT narrative critics at the time of *THE ANALOGICAL IMAGINATION* (1981) still apply today. Narrative criticism of the Bible has been almost entirely a-historical in character; that is to say, it has ignored questions of reference (*does this narrative really give us an accurate and reliable record of its subject-matter ?*), questions of source and pre-history (*what did this narrative look like at the earliest stage, and how has it changed ?*), questions of Sitz im Leben (*in what social setting was this narrative composed and used*), questions of redaction (*what distinctive emphases has the evangelist given this narrative and what social needs might these emphases be meeting in his community ?*), and so on. Narrative criticism has tended to be reactionary in tone in that it has been practised by those who have become disillusioned with the painstakingly scientific and relentlessly skeptical nature of some source and form criticism. Instead of establishing a

narrative critical programme in which the traditional methods of biblical criticism were included in a revised form, narrative critics have tended to cut themselves off from their predecessors by implying that literary and narrative criticism of the Bible precludes historical considerations. This rejection of historical questions has led to an inevitable reductionism in which biblical narrative becomes an elaborate fiction as opposed to an artful narrative historiography. The rectification of this problem is one of the first tasks of the present work.

It is my argument in Part One of this thesis that the new wine of narrative criticism must be poured into the old wineskins of traditional biblical criticism if it is to have any credibility at all, especially in Britain and Germany where there still seems to be a suspicious attitude towards the new literary and structuralist criticism of the Bible³. Present narrative critics can achieve this end by admitting that there is a great deal more to the narrative form than they have appreciated. Nearly all the narrative critics of the NT have rejected the sociological interests of form and redaction criticism, as well as the historical concerns of source and historical criticism, on the grounds that narratives are autonomous worlds which can be understood in their own right. However this belief is derived from structuralism and New criticism (which advocate a text-immanent approach to literary texts), both of which have tended to restrict narrative. In reality, narrative is a more complex phenomenon than this, as philosophers of history and sociologists have recently pointed out. The narrative form is used by historians whenever they try to reconstruct a coherent and "followable" account of the past⁴. The narrative form is used by individuals and by communities whenever they try to establish a meaningful sense of identity⁵. Thus the narrative form is really inseparable from questions of history and society. Since the history and

society of earliest Christianity are the targets of historical, source, form and redaction criticism of NT narrative, the question I want to ask is this: how can narrative criticism of the NT possibly be an a-historical method ? how can it avoid the concerns of traditional biblical criticism without simplifying the narrative form ?

In Part One of this thesis my aim is to provide the reader with a narrative hermeneutics in which the new focus on the aesthetics of biblical narrative is combined with questions of history and sociology, the provinces of the now time-honoured methods of biblical criticism. The justification which I shall give for this more integrative and inclusivist position is this: that NT narrative must not only be studied for its own sake; it must also be studied as a narrative interpretation of historical events and as a community narrative with a specific social function. It is for this reason that I break away from NT narrative criticism as it has so far been practised by including a substantial amount of material on the sociological importance of the narrative form (chapter three) and on the narrative history debate in history faculties in the 1960's and '70's (chapter four). The innovative aspect of my first four chapters on the narrative-critical method is therefore this integration of the two opposites of synchronic and diachronic methods in biblical criticism. The interpretation of biblical narrative as it now stands can be divided into two camps: those who examine the aesthetics of the final form of the narrative and who cut the text off from historical questions (the synchronic approach) and those who are still concerned to ask questions about the pre-history of a narrative (the diachronic approach). It is apparent at the moment that no one has attempted to formulate a method in which these two approaches are made to live together like the wolf and the lamb. I believe I have gone some way towards achieving this goal by

bringing the historical and sociological dimensions of the narrative form sharply into focus. In this respect, I believe I have filled at least some of the seven lacunae which Tracy saw in the narrative-critical method back in 1981.

It needs to be pointed out at this stage that the present work is not only an apology for a new narrative critical approach to the NT, it is also a work which aims to say new things about the fourth gospel. I decided at a very early phase in my research that it would be an unrewarding exercise to write a thesis purely on methodology which gave no examples of how the relevant method worked in practice. If a method really does have anything to offer to biblical hermeneutics, then it will be known by its fruits. For this reason, I decided to integrate theory and practice by using a particular gospel as a kind of test-case for what I wanted to say. My selection of the fourth gospel was not an arbitrary one. At the time when I began this project in 1982, the NT texts which had attracted most of the attention of literary and narrative critics were undoubtedly MARK and LUKE-ACTS, and there were signs that Jack Dean Kingsbury was ready to produce some insightful material on the narrative of Matthew's gospel¹². Alan Culpepper had not at that point published his ground-breaking study of the literary design of JOHN (ANATOMY OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL: 1983), and so I embarked on an investigation of JOHN's artistry. It very quickly became clear, however, that the use of an entire gospel as a test-case for my new narrative approach was far too ambitious. It would have resulted in an over-long dissertation and would, I feel sure, have ended up repeating many of Alan Culpepper's insights in his ANATOMY. It was for this reason that I looked over the fourth gospel for a narrative text that was both coherent and long enough for me to use it in its own right and on its own merits. I

found that narrative text in chapters 18 and 19 of the fourth gospel - the Johannine passion narrative.

Two things struck me as I attempted to apply the method explored in Part One of this dissertation to the text in question. First of all, it occurred to me that John 18-19 is the nearest thing to a self-contained narrative which one could hope to find in the entire NT. Even though these chapters should not be studied in isolation from the rest of JOHN, it is evident that somebody, at some stage, has given us a narrative with a clearly defined beginning, middle and end. John 18 begins in a garden, and John 19 ends in a garden. More than that, the two chapters are composed of three clearly defined sections: John 18.1-27, John 18.28-19.16a, John 19.16b-42. These three sections explore different Christological themes: section one examines the role of Jesus as shepherd. Section two looks at Jesus as King. Section three looks at Jesus as passover or paschal lamb. Each of these three sections, in other words, focusses on a different understanding of Jesus' person and work at the time of his death. And each of these sections is of almost exactly equal length (27 verses, 29½ verses, 27½ verses). This led me to think of John 18-19 as a kind of triptych: a narrative portrait of the passion and death of Jesus painted on three panels of equal size, all hinged together by the artistry of the evangelist. Secondly, this literary coherence led me to distinguish between the two phrases, THE BOOK OF CHRIST'S PASSION and THE PASSION NARRATIVE. Some scholars have tended to call John 13-20 the Johannine passion narrative¹³. I prefer to designate John 13-19 the BOOK OF CHRIST'S PASSION (with chapter 20, a separate though continuous entity to be called the Johannine *resurrection narrative*) and John 18-19 as the passion narrative proper. If John 18-19 is such an obviously coherent and self-contained narrative text, then it earns the right to be called the *Johannine passion*

narrative, whilst the narrative from the Last Supper to the burial of Jesus (13.1-19.42) can be called the BOOK of Christ's Passion.

The second thing which I quickly discovered in my research into this text was the fact that there is a paucity of secondary literature on John 18-19, and what secondary literature there was could not generally be categorised as synchronic, literary or narrative-critical in character. Surprisingly, there have only been - to my knowledge - two book-length scholarly studies¹⁴ devoted to John's passion narrative, Maurice Goguel's *LES SOURCES DU RECIT JOHANNIQUE DE LA PASSION* (Paris, 1910), and A. Dauer's *DIE PASSIONSGESCHICHTE IM JOHANNESSEVANGELIUM* (Munich, 1972). Goguel's study of John 18-19 was a work of source criticism whilst Dauer's was "eine traditionsgeschichtliche und theologische Untersuchung zu Joh 18.1-19.30" - a study combining source and redaction criticism. This meant that I realised early on that a narrative critical study of the Johannine passion narrative was going to be filling in two gaps in Johannine research; it was going to swell the very small corpus of book-length studies of John 18-19, and it was going to provide, for the first time, a rigorous and systematic analysis of the narrative artistry of the evangelist in these chapters. Only three other scholars have attempted to expose John 18-19 to a broadly-speaking narrative criticism. Two of them, Peter Ellis and Gerard Sloyan, wrote commentaries on JOHN which were influenced by composition criticism (Ellis) and Alan Culpepper's literary criticism (Sloyan)¹⁵. However, neither of them managed to say anything about John 18-19 which could not be found in previous commentaries on JOHN. The third, Charles Homer Griblin, wrote two articles in 1984 and 1986: *CONFRONTATIONS IN JOHN 18.1-27* and *JOHN'S NARRATION OF THE HEARING BEFORE PILATE* (John 18,28-19,16a). Both these articles examined aspects of John 18-19 "not so much from the standpoint of its sources as from that of its narrative progression"¹⁶, but

again contained very little that one could not have discovered from reading Raymond Brown's commentary on John 18-19 (which often shows sensitivity to literary matters).

What new insights does this dissertation give us concerning the fourth gospel in general, and John 18-19 in particular ? Concerning the fourth gospel as a whole, I hope that the reader will come away from this work with an appreciation of JOHN as narrative Christology - as an understanding of the person and work of Jesus expressed in an artistically constructed narrative (chapter one). I hope he/she will see that structuralist methods for the interpretation of narrative have a considerable amount of light to throw on a gospel which has received almost no attention from structuralist exegetes (chapter two). I hope he/she will begin to see more clearly how the fourth gospel functions as a community narrative (chapter three) and as a genre of narrative history which transcends the categories of fiction and historiography (chapter four). Concerning the passion narrative itself, I hope the reader will grasp some of the subtle narrative echo effects and implicit commentary which contributes to these chapters' being a most resonant demonstration of narrative Christology in practice (chapter five). I hope he/she will begin to grasp what was going on at a subliminal level in the mind of the evangelist when he structured his passion narrative in the particular way he chose (chapter 6). I hope he/she will recognize how John 18-19 might have functioned in its original social setting (chapter 7), and finally how John 18-19 is not fictional, mythical or "fantastic"¹⁶ (to use Käsemann's word) but a meta-historical portrait of the death of Jesus Christ. Throughout this work, I shall be combatting Käsemann's view that JOHN is unhistorical and proposing the view that the gospels are elaborate

narrative Christologies which (and here I add my own agenda) *do not lose their historical value just because they are stories.*

In the final analysis, this thesis is written by a Christian minister who has done his scholarship not only with (I trust) scientific rigour but also in an atmosphere of faith. This thesis is not only an addition to Johannine scholarship, it is also and above all a gift to the Church. I have, for a long time now, been seriously concerned by the effects of traditional methods of biblical interpretation upon men and women training for the ordained ministry. It seems to me that theological education in theological colleges and seminaries has not yet learnt to bridge the gap between the academy and the church. Too often the Church has taught biblical studies to its ordinands using methodologies which derive from the universities - where the Bible is studied for its own sake, and very often with a hermeneutic of suspicion. This has led to many men and women experiencing a crisis over whether one can preach any more on biblical texts in a traditional manner. The method offered in this thesis gives preachers a chance to do the kind of scholarship on biblical narratives which will give both them and their congregations fresh insights into old texts. I personally have no doubt that the original textualization of Jesus-narratives in the earliest churches was, in some senses, the death of them. Whilst they were still remembered and recited in an oral medium, they were always kept alive by their community narrators. Now, however, the print medium - along with the comparatively lifeless reading of lessons in our liturgies - has resulted in the kind of familiarity which breeds contempt. It is my prayer that this thesis will help many preachers in their task of reoralizing and revitalizing biblical narrative, so that the Church once again might experience and share the "classic", disclosing power of God's timeless stories.

FOOTNOTES TO INTRODUCTION.

1. D.Tracy, THE ANALOGICAL IMAGINATION: CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY AND THE CULTURE OF PLURALISM. London, SCM. 1981.
2. Ibid, p.279.
3. Ibid, p.279.
4. The phrase, "narrative Christology", derives from Robert Tannehill's article, THE GOSPEL OF MARK AS NARRATIVE CHRISTOLOGY. I am indebted to Tannehill's notions of "narrative Christology" and "narrative echo effects" throughout this thesis.
5. R.Barthes, INTRODUCTION TO THE STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF NARRATIVES, p.79 in IMAGE, MUSIC TEXT, ed. Stephen Heath..
6. The first two volumes of Paul Ricoeur's TIME AND NARRATIVE had been translated into English and published by the time this thesis was underway. Volume 3 had not yet been published. I must confess my indebtedness to Paul Ricoeur's work on narrative (see bibliography) throughout this thesis. For a summary of Ricoeur's thesis in TIME AND NARRATIVE, cf. his essay, THE NARRATIVE FUNCTION.
7. The image that many NT narrative critics use is one deriving from archeology. So Culpepper, ANATOMY p.3, writes: "The model of research is that of a "tell" in which archeologists can unearth strata which derive from different historical periods. This model depends on dissection and differentiation of elements within the gospel. Consequently, little attention has been given to the integrity of the whole, the way its component parts interrelate, its effects upon the reader, or the way it achieves its effects". Culpepper might have put it this way: *historical research treats JOHN as a tell; narrative criticism as a tale.*
8. D.Tracy, THE ANALOGICAL IMAGINATION, pp.296-7.
9. Literary criticism of the Bible in Britain has been confined almost entirely to the Old Testament. David Clines of Sheffield University is partly responsible for this new approach to the OT in this country. Literary and structuralist criticism of the NT has been almost non-existent in Great Britain during the 1980's. It is hardly an under-statement to say that NT scholars have not picked up the gauntlet thrown down by the Cambridge scholar, Frank Kermode, who published his narrative analysis of MARK in 1979 (THE GENESIS OF SECRECY).
10. See chapter 4, pp.130f.
11. See chapter 3, pp.91f.
12. See J.D.Kingsbury's MATTHEW: STRUCTURE, CHRISTOLOGY, KINGDOM. Philadelphia, Fortress Press. 1975.
13. V.C.Pfitzner, THE CORONATION OF THE KING, p.4. "In a real sense the narrative begins with the footwashing in chapter 13". C.H.Dodd, in

HISTORICAL TRADITION (p.29), sees the passion narrative as: Act I, the Leave-Taking; Acts II, the Arrest; Act III, the Trial; Act IV, the Execution; Act V, the Reunion.

14. Two popular books have been published on the Johannine passion narrative: Joseph Fenton's THE PASSION ACCORDING TO JOHN (1961), and John Bligh's THE SIGN OF THE CROSS: THE PASSION AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN (1975).

15. C.H.Giblin, JOHN'S NARRATION OF THE HEARING BEFORE PILATE, p.221.

16. E.Kasemann, THE TESTAMENT OF JESUS, p.43: "Judged by the modern concept of reality, our Gospel is more fantastic than any other writing of the New Testament".

CHAPTER ONE: JOHN AS NARRATIVE CHRISTOLOGY.
SECTION ONE: THE EMERGENCE OF NARRATIVE CRITICISM.

Until the late 1970's, the traditional methods for the study of the gospels and Acts were form criticism, source criticism, historical criticism, tradition history, redaction criticism, and textual criticism. Broadly speaking, these methods were concerned to answer the following questions: 1) What forms of material were available to the evangelists and how were they used in the earliest church ? (form criticism). 2) What sources were available to the evangelists when they wrote their gospels ? (source criticism). 3) How much do the gospels tell us about Jesus and about the churches for which they were written ? (historical criticism). 4) How much did the words and works of Jesus change during the years before the gospels were composed ? (tradition history). 5) What theological and sociological purposes lie behind the evangelist's selection and expression of Jesus material in the gospels ? (redaction criticism), and 6) what variations exist in the manuscripts of the gospel texts and which has the greatest claim to be correct ? (textual criticism). In other words, traditional methods of interpretation were more concerned with what lay behind NT narratives than with their final form and their literary, artistic features. Although each of these methods began with meticulous exegesis of NT narrative, none of them sought to answer the question, "What artistry is there in these NT stories ?"

A change began to occur most noticeably in the 1980's when two books were published on MARK AS STORY (1982/1983), one on MATTHEW AS STORY (1986), one on THE NARRATIVE UNITY OF LUKE-ACTS (1987) and one on the ANATOMY OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL (1983). Each of these works, and a whole host of lesser known books and articles (see bibliography), took up the challenge of looking at the final form of the gospels and Acts in order to

highlight those narrative dynamics which traditional methods had neglected. The groundwork for this new method of *narrative criticism* was begun by Eric Auerbach who, in 1953, published an influential book on realism in narrative called *MIMESIS*. His second chapter, in which he praised the extraordinary realism of the narrative in Mark, caused something of an awakening in biblical studies. In 1964, Amos Wilder published his book, *EARLY CHRISTIAN RHETORIC*, and included a ground-breaking chapter on the gospels as *story*. In 1969, William Beardslee included a similar emphasis in his *LITERARY CRITICISM OF THE NEW TESTAMENT*. In 1972, Norman Perrin advocated a greater interest in the narrative dynamics of the NT in a widely read paper entitled, *THE EVANGELIST AS AUTHOR*. In 1978, Norman Petersen published his *LITERARY CRITICISM FOR NEW TESTAMENT CRITICS* and Edgar McKnight his *MEANING IN TEXTS*, both concerned with narrative hermeneutics in connection with the gospels and Acts. In 1980, Frank Kermode published a book on narrative hermeneutics called *THE GENESIS OF SECRECY* which used MARK as its principal sample-text. With these works published, the stage was well and truly set for the ferment of narrative approaches to which we now turn.

THE GOSPEL OF MARK.

The gospel which attracted nearly all of the initial attention of emerging narrative critics was MARK, and the first book to devote itself to a full length study of its narrative was Rhoads and Michie's *MARK AS STORY* (1982), subtitled an "Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel". In this work, two American scholars combined to focus on the final form of the text as *narrative* rather than on its hypothesized prehistory. The two authors stated that their aim was a "literary" one, rather than an historical one'.

On its own, such a comment might have been confusing for two reasons: first because the phrase "literary criticism" had been a synonym for source criticism in NT studies (the very opposite of what Rhoads and Michie intended)²; secondly, because the very idea that the gospels and Acts might in some sense be literature had been questioned by form critics such as Martin Dibelius from the 1920's³. However, it is clear from an essay published in the same year entitled NARRATIVE CRITICISM AND THE GOSPEL OF MARK that the author's method was not literary but narrative criticism⁴. This underlined the fact that their intention was not to argue or assume the literary status of a gospel but rather to read it as it really is - as narrative. This they did first through the provision of a new translation of MARK and secondly through an analysis of MARK's narrative qualities, such as the NARRATOR, NARRATIVE SETTINGS, PLOT and CHARACTERIZATION. In conclusion, both Rhoads and Michie stated that "the author of Mark's Gospel tells a dynamic story and has woven the tale so as to create powerful effects on the reader"⁵.

In 1983, the British scholar Ernest Best published his MARK: THE GOSPEL AS STORY. Best pointed out in his first chapter that traditional scholarship of MARK had used the gospel as a quarry for information about a Christian community. Now, however, scholars had begun to recognize that books have an existence of their own once they are written. Consequently, "discussion on Mark has turned around once again and the Gospel is now viewed as a whole"⁶. Best's argument throughout his book is that the pre-Markan material which was eventually incorporated into the second gospel possessed no overall coherence. Miracle stories, parables, sayings all came to the author from independent streams of tradition. They were not already the episodes in a larger narrative totality. What the author of MARK achieved when he transformed oral traditions into a written gospel was the

creation of a plot. As Best puts it, "it is the 'plot' which holds Mark together"⁷. MARK's plot forms the "cement" which links together all the material selected by the author⁸. The items of MARK's traditions are like pearls, but the plot which he establishes is the connecting thread of purpose which links these pearls into a unified, narrative Christology⁹. MARK is therefore best described as "narrative" "though the narrative is not put forward as fiction"¹⁰. It is not fictional narrative because the author did not feel free to alter or create as he liked. "There is positive evidence that he had a real respect for the tradition and preserved much of its detail faithfully"¹¹.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW.

1986 saw the publication of MATTHEW AS STORY by the American scholar, Jack Dean Kingsbury. Kingsbury began by stating that his book was "a study in literary, or narrative criticism" and that it was "one of the first such books on Matthew to be written"¹². Kingsbury's aim was "to explore the world of MATTHEW's thought with an eye to the flow (plot) of the gospel-story that is being told"¹³. Kingsbury's method is a "product of literary criticism", and he carries out his investigation "in terms of categories that literary-theorists employ in their investigation of works such as the novel"¹⁴. Thus Kingsbury uses Seymour Chatman's communicational theory of narrative and E.M. Forster's "Aspects of the Novel" and applies their terminology to the gospel of Matthew¹⁵. Consequently, we have sections on events, characters, settings, the implied author, the narrator, the point of view, the implied reader, and structure. All these qualities are analyzed as aspects of MATTHEW's unified narrative. There is little attention to historical questions because, "When one reads the Matthean

narrative, one temporarily takes leave of one's familiar world of reality and enters into another world that is autonomous in its own right"¹⁶. Some attention is given to the community for which MATTHEW was written, but this is done by taking the implied reader in MATTHEW's story as an index of the real readers'¹⁷. In his dependence on Seymour Chatman and modern theorists of the novel (such as E.M. Forster), Kingsbury was following Alan Culpepper's ANATOMY OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL (1983), as we shall see in a moment. The same criticisms which we shall make of Culpepper's literary approach to JOHN can also be directed against Kingsbury's work.

LUKE-ACTS.

1986 also saw the publication of the first volume of Robert Tannehill's NARRATIVE UNITY OF LUKE-ACTS: A LITERARY INTERPRETATION. Robert Tannehill's narrative-critical essays on the synoptic gospels and Acts had been consistently insightful before the publication of this work. Particularly interesting had been his DISCIPLES IN MARK: THE FUNCTION OF A NARRATIVE ROLE (1977) and his GOSPEL OF MARK AS NARRATIVE CHRISTOLOGY (1979). Now, after a preparatory essay entitled THE COMPOSITION OF ACTS 3-5: NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND ECHO EFFECT (1984), Tannehill turned his attention to the narrative of Luke-Acts. Tannehill began with the remark that "Luke-Acts... was written by an author of literary skill and rich imagination who had a complex vision of the significance of Jesus Christ and of the mission in which he is the central figure"¹⁸. Luke-Acts is therefore a "unified literary work of two volumes"¹⁹. Tannehill's claim is that traditional methods of biblical criticism lack the leading concepts which enable scholars to see how a narrative like Luke-Acts achieves unity. However, "the recent development of narrative criticism... opens new

opportunities"²⁰, and helps us to identify the author's disclosures of his overarching purpose. The key concept Tannehill uses is that of narrative "echo effects"²¹. These are the internal connections between different parts of the narrative. As Tannehill puts it, "Themes will be developed, dropped, then presented again. Characters and actions may echo characters and actions in another part of the story, as well as characters and actions of the scriptural story which preceded Luke-Acts"²². Tannehill's narrative analysis seeks to discover those connections which provide internal commentary on the story.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

What examples do we have of narrative studies of the fourth gospel ? The reader should consult the Bibliography for a comprehensive list of literary or narrative studies of JOHN. There she/he will find a fair number of literary and narrative studies on the fourth gospel. By far the most influential of these has been Alan Culpepper's ANATOMY OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL: A STUDY IN LITERARY DESIGN (1983). Culpepper's best-known work of Johannine scholarship before this was his JOHANNINE SCHOOL (1975), which was an attempt to reconstruct through the Johannine literature the school of writers responsible for the composition of JOHN. Culpepper's ANATOMY could not have been more different. Instead of a work of historical reconstruction, his ANATOMY was a study in the narrative world of the fourth gospel. Indeed, Culpepper almost seemed to reject his earlier work when he criticized Johannine scholars in general for treating JOHN as a window onto the history of the Johannine community as opposed to "the literary creation of the evangelist"²³. JOHN, in Culpepper's eyes, is "novelistic, realistic narrative"²⁴, and it should be read primarily as

story and not as *history*. Thus, questions concerning sources and origins are set aside because "the experience of reading the text is more important than understanding the process of its composition"²⁵. What is required instead is a method for appreciating JOHN as a unified narrative. As in the case of Kingsbury's later book on MATTHEW, Culpepper uses Seymour Chatman's communicational model of narrative as his starting-point, a model which looks like this²⁶:

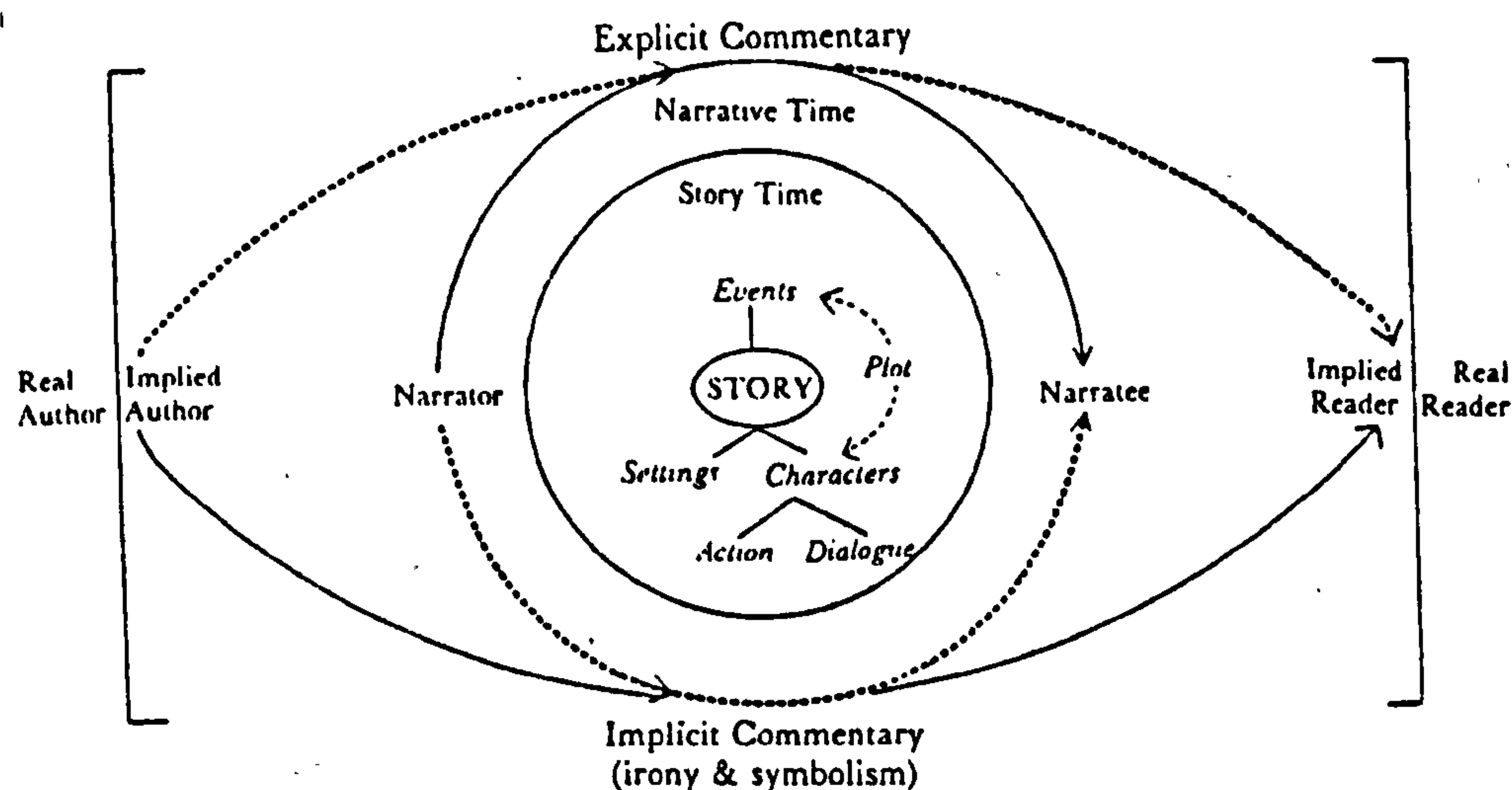


Figure 1.

One understands this model as follows: a narrative presupposes a story-teller, a story and an audience. Between the author and the reader stands the text of this story (enclosed in the diagram between the parentheses). An important distinction must then be made between the real author and the real reader, on the one hand, and then between these two entities and their counterparts in the narrative itself (the implied author

and implied reader). The implied author is the author suggested by the choice and arrangement of material, the author who is inferred from the internal narrative dynamics. This implied author may well be different in character from the actual author, just as the inferred or implied reader may be different from the real reader. Altogether, the reader's response is shaped and directed by characterization (the way in which the characters in the story are depicted), by narrative settings, plot (the selection and organization of material into a chronological unity), and "implicit commentary" (the means used by the narrator to communicate indirectly with the reader, including irony and symbolism). It is these narrative elements which establish the communication between author and reader, that is why Culpepper's book focusses on point of view, narrative time, plot, characters, implicit commentary and the implied reader in JOHN (categories hitherto neglected in Johannine studies). It is precisely through these narrative elements that the gospel communicates its confessed aim of moving the reader to new insights and to faith in Jesus as the Son of God (see Jn 20.31).

Culpepper's study is a significant methodological experiment and an extremely valuable contribution to Johannine studies²⁷. Above all, it has helped scholars to rediscover the unified story of a gospel whose narrative unity has suffered greatly at the hands of displacement theorists like Rudolf Bultmann²⁸. However, the value judgement Culpepper passes on JOHN, that it is "magnificent but flawed"²⁹, could really be passed on his own book. For example, Culpepper takes it too much for granted that a gospel can be studied as if it were a novel. The major theorists on whom he (and Kingsbury later) depends are all students of modern fiction (E.M. Forster, Gerard Genette and Seymour Chatman in particular) but it is a moot point whether their novel-based models are applicable in the context of first

century narratives. Eric Auerbach's *MIMESIS* is partly responsible here: by showing how "realistic" or novel-like *MARK* was, he unwittingly encouraged a number of biblical scholars to treat the gospels as novels³⁰. Also to blame is what Scholes and Kellogg have described as the modern idolatry of the novel form³¹. So, whilst Culpepper is not guilty of calling gospel narratives "primitive", it needs to be stated that the sophistications of Gospel narrative are quite different from the subtleties of modern novels³². Gospel narratives share in the subtleties of Old Testament narratives, not in the subtleties of novels such as *ULYSSES*. It is against this background that Johannine narrative should be judged, and not against the background of the modern novel. As it stands, Culpepper's method is fundamentally anachronistic³³.

A related problem with Culpepper's work centres on his neglect of the historical dimension of *JOHN*. Culpepper begins his book by stressing that he is not against historical criticism and yet the emphasis is on *JOHN* as fiction and on the plea for *JOHN* not to be used as a window onto the Johannine community³⁴. However, the recent "new look" at the fourth gospel has reemphasized the value of *JOHN*'s historical traditions³⁵, and scholarship from J.L. Martyn's *HISTORY AND THEOLOGY* (1968) onwards has mainly devoted itself to identifying community history within the fourth gospel³⁶. Even though Culpepper may not be using the word fiction to connote "invention" and "falsehood", the general approach of his book does tend to obscure the value of *JOHN* as narrative history and as community narrative. As far as historicity is concerned, the reason for this lies in Culpepper's dependence on Frank Kermode's 1979 narrative analysis of *MARK* (which we shall study in chapter four) which began the trend of regarding the gospels as fictional novels. As for Culpepper's neglect of the community dimension of *JOHN*, this may well derive from the allegorizing

tendencies of various community reconstructionists³⁷, but it probably also derives from Culpepper's New critical bias. Like New criticism, his method is text-immanent; that is, it bypasses extrinsic, historical and sociological factors in the task of literary interpretation³⁸. The problem here is that biblical narrative is a functional structure; it is social discourse oriented to an historical audience³⁹. It is also a report in story-form of past history. One can no more ignore the audience of JOHN than one can the historical Jesus in JOHN.

CONCLUSIONS.

In this section we have traced the emergence of narrative criticism from the time of Eric Auerbach's *MIMESIS* in 1953. We have demonstrated how NT narrative criticism has forced scholars to look at the artistry of gospel story, and yet at the same time we have exposed the weaknesses of regarding the gospels as fictional novels, and of neglecting the original milieu in which these narratives were composed. In this present work, it is our aim to introduce a form of narrative criticism which does full justice to the gospel of John as narrative Christology but which also takes into account historical questions concerning sources and community. Our method here is partly indebted to Robert Tannehill's groundbreaking essay published in 1979, *THE GOSPEL OF MARK AS NARRATIVE CHRISTOLOGY* (as the subtitle of this thesis suggests). Tannehill's essay had two fundamental aims: first, to identify and evaluate the narrative composition of MARK, especially those aspects of composition which make it a continuous, developing story; secondly, to show these narrative qualities are used by the author to persuade the reader of the truthfulness of his Christological credo. This led Tannehill to a close scrutiny of the plot,

characterization, role relationships, "commissions"⁴⁰, conflicts, developments, themes, narrative patterns, irony, paradox, and the ways in which these narrative dynamics function in the communication between author and reader. Tannehill's essay was important not only because it reclaimed the narrative unity of MARK, but also because it showed that NT narrative is a rhetorical phenomenon carefully engineered to reinforce a particular understanding of Jesus in the minds of its readers.

The narrative-critical method used in this thesis therefore owes much to Tannehill's approach outlined above. We too shall be looking, especially in this chapter, at the narrative unity of JOHN and at the Christological purpose behind JOHN's distinctive composition. Where we will be going beyond Tannehill is in the three areas of narrative structure, social discourse and narrative history. In the case of narrative structure, we shall be employing the categories of structuralism in order to show how the "deep structures" of JOHN contribute to its narrative Christology. Tannehill himself seems dubious about the value of structuralism as a constructive interpretative tool⁴¹, but we hope in this study to illustrate something of its importance for any discussion of narrative Christology. In the case of social discourse, we shall be employing categories from the sociology of knowledge and the sociology of religion in order to show how JOHN's narrative Christology must not be read as a closed world but as an index of its community's value-system and as a *functional discourse*. In the case of narrative history, we shall be employing categories from the narrative history debate in the 1960's and 1970's (a debate conducted mainly by philosophers of history) to ask what status JOHN's narrative Christology possesses as historiography. In diagrammatical form, our own narrative-critical method looks like this:

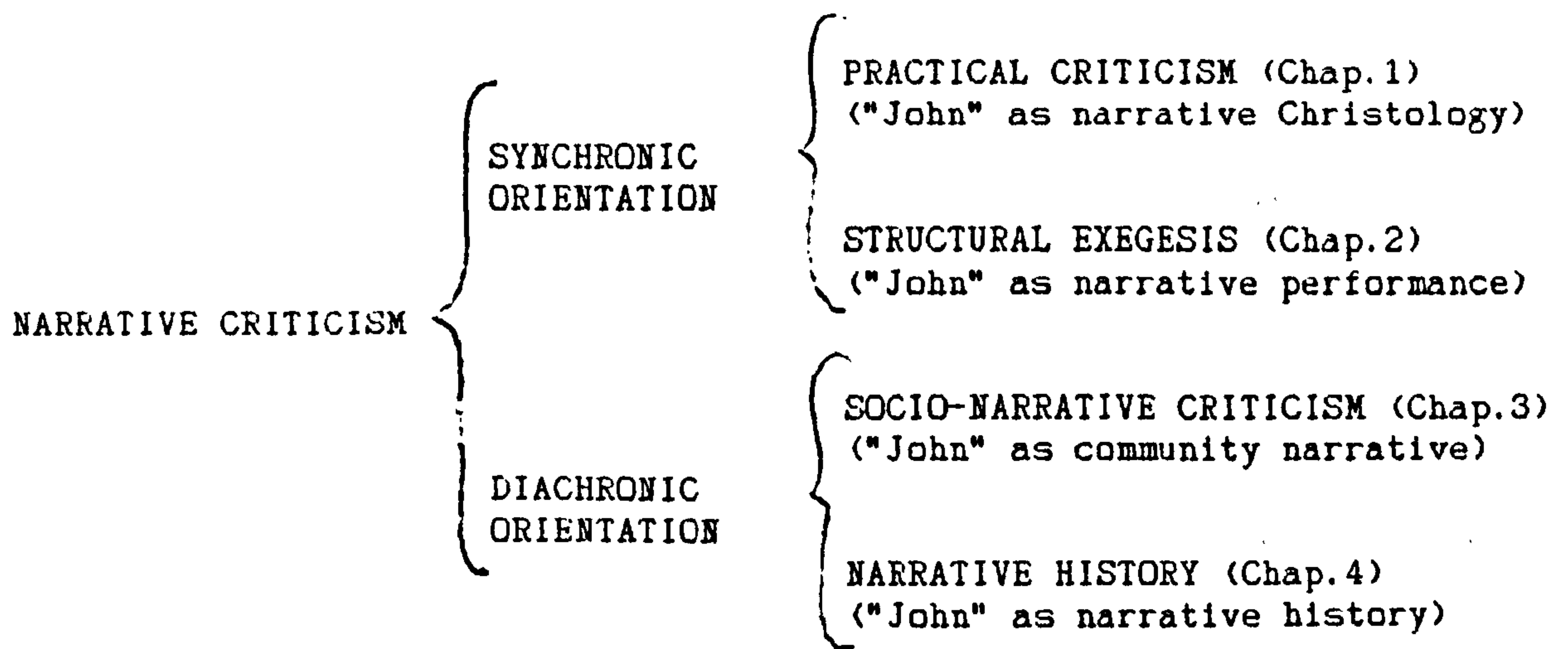


Figure 2.

In Part Two of this thesis, our aim is to show how each of these four orientations of narrative criticism illumines different dimensions of the passion account in John 18-19. Thus the four chapters of Part Two will correspond with the four chapters of Part One.

CHAPTER ONE.

SECTION TWO. THE NARRATIVE ARTISTRY AND UNITY OF JOHN.

The subtitle of this thesis, THE FOURTH GOSPEL AS NARRATIVE CHRISTOLOGY, implies that it is possible to view the fourth gospel as a unified narrative. This much has been recognized for many decades. E.F. Scott wrote in 1906 that "John did not set himself to write a complete history, but only to enforce a given view of the Christian revelation in the light of selected facts. He is thus left free to shape his narrative on a deliberate artistic plan, and it unfolds itself with something of the ordered majesty and simplicity of a Greek tragedy"⁴². In 1932, P.C. Sands emphasized Johannine craftsmanship when he wrote of "the book's unity, its appearance of being "woven without seam", as Strauss said, in spite of certain dislocations of sections in our present text"⁴³. Twenty years later, C.H. Dodd made this statement: "what he (the author of JOHN) gives us is no ordinary narrative, where one thing follows another in a simple succession. The links that connect one episode with another are extremely subtle. It is rather like a musical fugue. A theme is announced, and developed up to a point; then a second theme is introduced and interwoven with the first, then perhaps a third, with fresh interweaving, until an intricate pattern is evolved, which yet has the unity of a consummate work of art. The Fourth Gospel is more than any of the others an artistic and imaginative whole"⁴⁴. Finally, in 1970 David Wead crystallised some of these thoughts in his dissertation entitled, THE LITERARY DEVICES IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL⁴⁵.

From these comments we can see that there has rarely been a time during this century when the fourth gospel has not been praised for its artistic and narrative unity. However, just as form criticism delayed widespread literary appreciation of the synoptic gospels and Acts⁴⁶, so

source criticism delayed widespread literary and narrative appreciation of JOHN. Source critics began to question Strauss's belief that JOHN was like the seamless robe mentioned in Jn 19.23. Indeed, some have asserted that "the evangelist was not a master story-teller" and that he had no interest in "a unified style" or "a polished narrative"⁴⁷. As Robert Fortna wrote in 1970: "the interpreter of John's Gospel is confronted from the outset by a fundamental literary phenomenon, and one which, in degree at least, distinguishes that Gospel from the other three, namely the presence of the so-called aporias - the many inconsistencies, disjunctures, and hard connections, even contradictions - which the text shows, notably in the narrative portions, and which cannot be accounted for by textual criticism"⁴⁸. These aporias, which Fortna interprets as interruptions in the flow of the narrative, are editorial seams. They are clues which tell us that there has been substantial redaction or editing of an original vorlage (narrative source). This leads Fortna to propose that the gospel is the work of one principal author ("John"), but that this same John edited and disrupted his earlier narrative to produce a flawed narrative. Thus, whilst Dodd and others were highlighting JOHN's unity, Fortna and other source critics were exposing its apparent disunity⁴⁹.

More detailed holistic appreciation of Johannine narrative had to wait until the presuppositions and discoveries of such source criticism had been called into question. Barnabas Lindars was one of the the first scholars to outline the problems with Robert Fortna's approach. He repeated Fortna's working hypothesis that John had "incorporated virtually the whole source in his gospel (so that it can be reconstructed simply by stripping off the non-Johannine elements)"⁵⁰ and complained that it ignored a unity of style in JOHN which had been underlined by Eduard Schweizer and E. Ruckstuhl⁵¹. Time and again, argues Lindars, Fortna ascribes to John's

source features which are characteristic of John's creative writing style. Time and again Fortna describes as aporias what can be explained in terms of narrative logic. The picture of the author which is consequently developed is one of a "scissors-and-paste" man, and not the more accurate one of "a highly creative writer"⁵². The picture of the text which is evoked is one of a clumsy patchwork quilt, and not the unified narrative symphony Dodd so clearly perceived. As John Robinson saw, the problem is that the so-called aporias are more in Fortna's mind than they are in the text. As he somewhat cynically remarked, "Fortna's analysis is inevitably interspersed with frequent examples of "may", "probably" and "apparently" (with "obviously" and "clearly" thrown in to lend an air of confidence...)"⁵³. Roughnesses there might be, Robinson conceded, but they are the exception and not the rule. Non sequiturs such as Jn 14.31 are rarer than Fortna imagined⁵⁴.

In spite of this valid critique, it is possible to go too far in dismissing source criticism. When Marinus de Jonge strengthened the momentum towards synchronic, literary analyses of JOHN in the late 1970's, he was too quick to dismiss source-critical considerations from his programme (as most narrative critics have)⁵⁵, and the result was that subsequent scholars like G.C. Nicholson began uncritically to assume that this rejection of the method was unimpeachable⁵⁶. In reality, however, "probing agnosticism"⁵⁷ is preferable to outright iconoclasm. The widespread use of sources in NT documents should persuade us "that we must not shy away from the possibility that the fourth evangelist too availed himself of written materials in the tradition known to him"⁵⁸. That there are occasional roughnesses in the narrative (particularly at 14.31) is good evidence for the existence of sources since they look more like editorial interruptions than authorial oversights. Editorial activity, of course,

suggests that the gospel was composed at different stages and, indeed, this is the view of JOHN's composition which has remained the most plausible throughout this century. In this developmental picture, the gospel is seen principally as the work of an evangelist in the Johannine community (Jii), whose work draws on oral and written traditions deriving from the beloved disciple which circulated independently of the synoptics (Ji), but whose material has been supplemented and even altered by a later redactor (Jiii) - hence the "aporias"⁵⁹.

At first glance, such a compositional hypothesis appears to confirm the argument concerning narrative disunity in JOHN, for do not the breaks and inconsistencies such as 14.31, coupled with the idea that JOHN was composed by different hands, deny its claim to unity? Raymond Brown has persuasively answered the charge that multiple authorship precludes artistry⁶⁰. He argues that the gospel is principally the work of a single hand, even though it derives from an earlier eye-witness and has been edited later. This single hand belonged to a distinctive figure in the primitive church who used the raw material of an eye-witness tradition of Jesus' words and works and turned it into a particular theological cast and expression. This material he eventually gathered into a continuous gospel narrative, which closely followed the traditional pattern of the baptism, the ministry and the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. Even though a later redactor rearranged the narrative at points (for example, placing the discourses after 14.31), and even though he added more traditional material (chapter 21, for instance), the fourth gospel is still the work of one writer - the evangelist who preached and taught in the primitive church. As Brown concludes, the beloved disciple is the AUTHORITY behind the gospel whilst the evangelist is the AUTHOR⁶¹. It is the evangelist's imagination which provides the narrative unity and artistry of JOHN⁶².

Evidence for narrative and stylistic unity in JOHN is properly speaking far more compelling and conclusive than the evidence against adduced by Fortna. Leland Ryken's literary study of the fourth gospel demonstrates this truth impressively. His argument is that "the organization of the Gospel of John is based on narrative principles"⁶³. Ryken shows how the evangelist varies long and short episodes, narration and dialogue, encounters with individuals and encounters with crowds. He shows how the gospel is structured as a series of progressions: the progressive intensification of plot conflict, the movement towards the climax of Christ's execution, the growing conflict between belief and unbelief. He identifies the way in which the evangelist has structured his material according to number patterns - particularly the numbers three and seven. There are three passovers and three other feasts that Jesus attends. John the Baptist three times states his witness to John's messiahship. Later in the narrative Jesus is three times condemned. His innocence is declared three times by Pilate. Jesus speaks three times from the cross and appears three times after the resurrection. There are three denials by Peter and three stages in Christ's restoration of Peter. There are seven signs or miracles which Jesus performs. There are seven statements by Jesus beginning with the formula "I AM", and so on. These number patterns permeate the whole gospel, and, as we shall see in chapter five, the Johannine passion account is no exception to this rule, with its tripartite structure and its divisions into three and seven within that structure.

More than anything else, it is Christology which gives unity to the narrative of JOHN. For example, the evangelist's understanding of Jesus as the eschatological judge who is ironically on trial has long since been recognized as a unifying theme in JOHN⁶⁴. It has been shown that "a number of episodes in the Gospel are deliberately reported in the form of legal

proceedings and that characteristic Johannine terms such as "evidence" and "witness" have their full technical force"⁶⁵. The whole notion of Jesus as judge is such a pervasive idea in JOHN that it is almost possible to describe the gospel as an extended trial narrative. As V.C.Pfitzner has put it, "the whole Gospel develops a courtroom scene in which the Son of God, who has come to earth, is on trial for His Sonship. In particular, the words *krisis/krinein* and *marturia/ marturein* play a prominent role as the courtroom drama unfolds"⁶⁶. As well as this judicial motif is the theme of the divinity of Jesus, which surfaces in the I AM sayings deployed throughout the Gospel (6.35, 8.12, 10.7, 10.11, 11.25, 14.6, and 15.1). Alongside this is the evangelist's understanding of Jesus as a worker of signs which bring glory to God. Like the EGO EIMI sayings, the SEMEIA are situated throughout the gospel at 2.1-11, 4.46-51, 5.1-18, 6.1-13, 6.16-21, 9.1-7, 11.1-44. Finally, there is JOHN's picture of Jesus as the true paschal lamb, which leads to his mention of the three Passovers, with the third one synchronizing Jesus' death with the slaughter of the lambs in the temple. Everywhere, in other words, Christology unifies the narrative.

When Robert Tannehill wrote his essay on THE GOSPEL OF MARK AS NARRATIVE CHRISTOLOGY in 1979, he wrote that "Jesus is the central figure in the gospel of Mark, and the author is centrally concerned to present (or re-present) Jesus to his readers so that his significance for their lives becomes clear. He does this in the form of a story"⁶⁷. Tannehill saw MARK as a unified narrative because, in spite of clear division into episodes, there are connecting Christological threads which bind the story together. This led Tannehill to commend the phrase *narrative Christology* as a fitting description of the gospel genre. In truth, there could be no more apt description of the fourth gospel. The aim expressed by the author in John 20.31 is as follows: "these have been recorded so that you may have faith

that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God". In terms of our narrative categories, we might retranslate this as follows: "every detail of this narrative has been selected and expressed in such a way that you might accept its fundamental Christological belief, that Jesus IS the Christ". Quite clearly, then, the author of JOHN is writing narrative Christology. He wants his readers to believe that Jesus of Nazareth really was and is the Christ. Our conclusion is that JOHN is a narrative unity because its Christology unites the concepts, images and episodes of the gospel into a coherent whole. JOHN may contain moments where the narrative appears flawed, but in the final analysis the overall picture is one of a gospel which has been artistically conceived so that its readers might have a true faith in and understanding about Jesus of Nazareth.

CHAPTER ONE.

SECTION THREE. READING JOHN AS NARRATIVE CHRISTOLOGY.

How then do we analyze the gospel of John as narrative Christology ? In this study, our procedure begins with something called "practical criticism"⁶⁸ and not, as traditionally, with source criticism. This is because the final form of the text (once the correct manuscript readings have been established) "remains determinate and stable under wide terminological, even conceptual variations"⁶⁹. By "practical" we mean "realistic" in this context. Already in our first section we have drawn attention to the anachronistic tendency of novelizing the gospels, a tendency which Alter describes as "the pitfall of gratuitously modernizing the ancient through the subtle pressure of interpretative ingenuity"⁷⁰. We choose instead to assess NT narrative against its natural background, which is primarily OT narrative, and secondarily those hellenistic narrative forms whose presence can be clearly felt. By "criticism" we mean something more than just scientific exegesis. Robert Fowler distinguishes between reading and criticizing in reader-response theory⁷¹. For Fowler, reading involves an openness to the story whilst criticism requires detachment. The former requires participation, the latter distance. In our use of the word "criticism" we want to include both poles of this reading/criticism continuum. Practical criticism begins with a reading of the narrative AS IT IS. It begins with an imaginative openness to the text's narrative world. It then proceeds to a detailed analysis of the narrative dynamics which elicit the responses we experience.

Practical criticism of NT narrative aims to uncover the basic ingredients of its stories and the ways in which they serve the rhetorical purpose of persuading an audience about the significance of Jesus. What are these basic ingredients ? Another of Seymour Chatman's narrative diagrams

is useful here. However, in view of our remarks earlier concerning the dangers of viewing NT narrative in the light of novelistic narrative, we have freely adapted this model so that its terms are germane to gospel studies. In the diagram, we distinguish between STORY and DISCOURSE. For Chatman, the story of a narrative is its content, comprising the chain of events (actions and happenings) as well as the existents (characters, items of setting). The discourse of a narrative is the means by which that story is communicated. Discourse therefore includes both narrative structures (such as plot, implicit commentary, point of view) as well as the narrative form (its medium, e.g. gospel, passion account, parable, miracle story, etc). As Chatman puts it, "the story is the WHAT in a narrative...discourse the HOW"⁷². Chatman's diagram, adapted for gospel studies, might look like this⁷³:

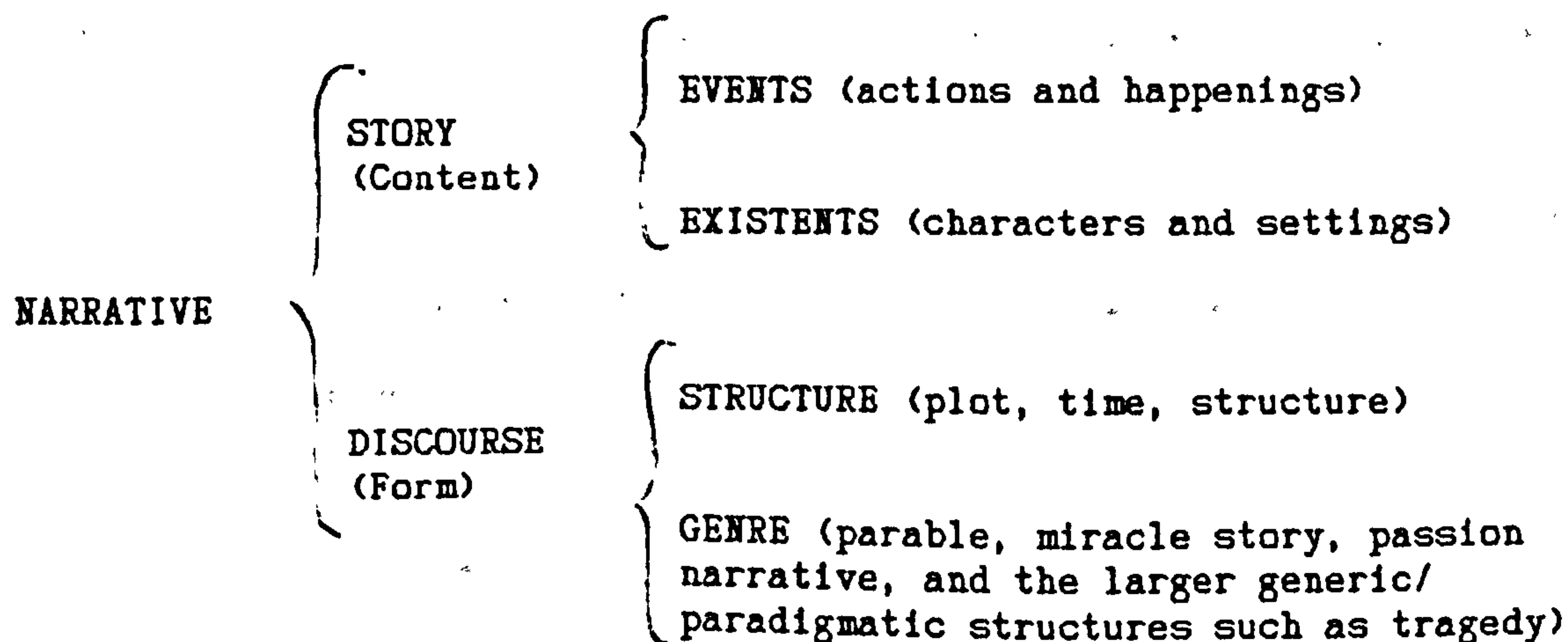


Figure 3.

Three important caveats need to be entered before using this model in Johannine studies. First of all, it has been shown that although analysis of narrative depends on the distinction between story (content) and discourse (form), too great a concentration on either one will obscure the relation of dependency that exists between the two⁷⁴. Separating story

and discourse too dramatically leads to that segregation of content and form which modern literary theory has heavily criticized⁷⁵. Secondly, it needs to be remembered that there is a difference in denotation between the use of the word "discourse" in Johannine studies, and its use in recent narrative theory. In Johannine studies, "discourse" has denoted the parts of JOHN which are in direct speech, particularly the lengthy passages of monologue spoken by Jesus. In traditional Johannine studies, therefore, discourse has acted as an antonym for narration, whereas in recent narrative theory it has denoted the means by which a story is communicated. Thirdly, it might be felt looking at Chatman's diagram that narrative criticism is more applicable to the narrated parts than to the discourse or speech parts of JOHN. However, narrative criticism is not suspended in favour of a special speech analysis just because the text enters direct speech. As James Muilenburg showed in his *LITERARY FORM IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL* (1932), the formal literary manner of the writer of the fourth gospel is just as apparent in dialogue as it is in narration, and in any case, "the division between narrative...and discourse is much less sharp than is often presumed"⁷⁶. JOHN's speeches are always earthed in the gospel's narrative world. They do not occur in vacuo but form an indispensable part of the story. As such, they must be subjected to narrative criticism along with the narrated parts of the gospel.

What, then, should a practical-critical approach to NT narrative consider ? Leland Ryken, in his book *HOW TO READ THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE* (1984), proposes that the following items should be closely examined in any literary analysis of biblical stories⁷⁷.

- 1) Physical, temporal and cultural settings in a story.
- 2) Characters in the story, with special emphasis on the protagonist.
- 3) Plot conflicts and their resolution.
- 4) Aspects of narrative suspense (how the story arouses curiosity about its outcome).
- 5) The protagonist's experiment in living as an implied comment about life.

- 6) Narrative unity, coherence and emphasis.
- 7) Elements of testing and choice in the story.
- 8) Character progress and transformation.
- 9) Foils, dramatic irony, and poetic justice.
- 10) The implied assertions about reality, morality, and values.
- 11) Repetition and highlighting as clues to what the story is about.
- 12) Point of view in the story - how the writer gets a reader to share his attitude toward the characters and events.

Obviously, when one compares Culpepper's 1983 approach to JOHN's story with Ryken's 1984 approach to biblical stories, we can see that there are a number of different possible approaches which one could use. In this work, our method involves detailed inspection of SUMMARIES (what Ryken calls "settings"), CHARACTERS, PLOT and STRUCTURE, IMPLICIT COMMENTARY, NARRATOR and POINT OF VIEW, NARRATIVE ECHO EFFECTS, the IDEAL NARRATIVE AUDIENCE and NARRATIVE TIME.

NARRATIVE SUMMARIES.

Practical criticism of Johannine narrative begins with the exercise of discovering and redescribing the story under discussion. When we expose the Johannine passion account to our narrative-critical method in Part Two, we shall call these redescriptions "narrative summaries". Such summaries are not arbitrary acts of renaming. They are carefully modulated evocations of what in Seymour Chatman's diagram are called "events" and "setting". In the case of the latter, we shall want to discern the narrative space depicted in the story, whether it is geographical, topographical or architectural. For instance, in the trial narrative (Jn.18.28-19.16a), we need to recognize the two-stage setting inside and outside the praetorium if we are properly to appreciate the dramatic quality of the narrative. In the case of "events" (actions or happenings which can be described by a verb), these can be identified at a number of different levels. There are physical events, speech events and mental

events in narratives. A physical event is what Chatman calls a "process statement"⁷⁸, such as "at daybreak, they took Jesus from Caiaphas to the praetorium" (Jn.18.28). A speech event is simply a statement made in direct speech, such as Pilate's, "What accusation are you bringing against this man?" (Jn.18.29). A mental event is the description of a thought, feeling, perception or sensation, such as the statement, "when Pilate heard this kind of talk, he was more afraid than ever" (Jn.19.8). Out of all these, only the "kernel" events⁷⁹ (i.e. the ones which cannot be deleted without destroying the narrative) will be named in our summaries.

CHARACTERIZATION.

The second object of investigation in our practical criticism of STORY is what Chatman calls the "existents" or characters. In recent narrative criticism of the NT it has been customary to use Forster's classic distinction between "flat" (or one-dimensional) and "round" (or developed) characters as the yardstick for evaluating gospel characterization⁸⁰. Culpepper believes that "the implications of this observation for the study of the gospels is powerful"⁸¹. However, even though the value of Forster's study cannot be ignored, its precise application to gospel narratives is much more questionable than Culpepper, Kingsbury and others appear to recognize. There are two things in particular which make Forster's terminology impractical. First, Forster's criteria are aspects of the novel and not aspects of first century narrative. Characters in the gospels need to be analyzed with reference to history, and not according to the laws of fiction. Secondly, it needs to be recognized in any case that very few narrative theorists use Forster's terminology without criticism. Rimmon-Kenan has argued that Forster draws too stark a dichotomy between "flat" and "round" characterisation⁸². In our

present study Forster's categories would consequently fail to explain the vitality and depth in JOHN's minor characters such as Pilate. Joseph Ewen proposes instead a system of classification in which characters are seen as points along a continuum. We would argue that Rimmon-Kenan and Ewen, because they are Hebrew narrative theorists, are better guides than Forster in interpreting so markedly Jewish a gospel.

A more useful model for evaluating gospel characters is as follows: first of all one should aim to evaluate what "kind" of characterization a figure in JOHN exemplifies. Daiches argues that there are three ways of creating a character. One can provide a "complete initial portrait" as the character enters the narrative world, "followed by events which confirm the portrait". Or, one can introduce a character as "a shadowy and indeterminate creature" who only becomes a living, definable personality after responding to various events - "the emergence of the complete character from the action". Or finally, one can have "the character changing or developing", so that while the initial portrait is valid with reference to the situation presented at the beginning, it ceases to be valid by the time we reach the conclusion³³. Secondly, one should aim to assess the "nature" of the characters depicted. To this end, Robert Alter has shown that there is, in biblical narrative, a "scale of means, in ascending order of explicitness and certainty, for conveying information about the motives, the attitudes, the moral nature of characters"³⁴. At the lowest end of the scale, we infer character from actions or appearances. At the middle of the scale, we weigh different claims that arise from a character's actual words. Higher up the scale, we have the report of inward speech, where we enter relative certainty. At the top, we have the narrator's explicit statement of what the character feels, intends and desires, and here we move into the realm of certainty³⁵. In any discussion

of gospel characters we must bear in mind Alter's insistence that biblical narrative displays an artful reticence where modern fiction gives us psychological precision⁸⁶.

PLOT AND STRUCTURE.

If characters are the property of story (the WHAT of narrative), plot and structure are the property of discourse (the HOW). One of the most useful discussions of plot in gospel studies is Frank Matera's *THE PLOT OF MATTHEW'S GOSPEL*. Matera points out that an author creates a plot when he arranges incidents into a coherent narrative whole with a beginning, a middle and an end. Plot therefore has to do with time and causality, "because actions occurring after the beginning result as the natural consequence of what has preceded, and the end is the inevitable or natural result of what has taken place"⁸⁷. Paul Ricoeur talks of "emplotment" as a configurational act which creates a meaningful "ensemble of interrelationships"⁸⁸, a synthesis of disparate material into a beginning, a middle and an end. He compares it with metaphor. In a metaphor, heterogenous facts of life are brought together into an unlikely and surprising accord. Thus (to take an example of our own), when Ted Hughes describes a thistle as "a grasped fistful of splintered weapons"⁸⁹, he achieves a surprising unity between a fist, splinters, weapons and thistles (note also the approximate unity of sound between "thistle" and "fistful"). Ricoeur argues that plots do this work of synthesis as well, for they bring together "goals, causes and chance" into "the temporal unity of a whole and complete action"⁹⁰. Plot is important in our present study because "conscious plotting of the narrative is more obvious in John than in the synoptics"⁹¹. This is especially true in the case of the passion narrative, for here the evangelist establishes a plot in which the death of Jesus

coincides with the slaughter of the passover lambs in the temple. Such a coincidence is arguably historical, but the evangelist emphasizes it in order to suggest the Christological idea that Jesus is the true paschal lamb. JOHN uses narrative chronology to highlight narrative Christology.

What then is "structure" in narrative theory? It is important that we are clear about the meaning of "structure" because narratologists seem to have their own preferred definition of the term⁹². The major difference between plot and structure is this, that whilst plot is the organizing principle which gives order and meaning to separate events, structure is the architectural end-product of this arrangement of parts into a whole. For example, the fourth evangelist organizes episodes in his gospel so that the death of Jesus coincides with the slaughter of the Passover lambs in the temple. This process is called emplotment since the evangelist has yoked two different events into one poignant and complete temporal unity. However, this co-incidence of events is merely one aspect of a larger body of material which has been given a final shape by the evangelist. As we shall point out in Part Two, the evangelist has imposed a particular structure on his passion account. It is made up of three equal sections in turn comprising groups of either three or seven episodes. Such a structure is an architectural unity which is clearly visible. Structure is therefore the end-product of emplotment. Structure is an end, whilst emplotment is a process or a means.

IMPLICIT COMMENTARY.

One cannot speak of the emplotment and structure of a narrative without speaking of its "implicit commentary"⁹³, since it is often by recurrent themes, symbols and irony that a narrative is held together. Themes are "the basic ideas of narratives" and their function is to "give

internal shape and completeness to a sequence of characters and motifs"⁹⁴ . In other words, themes are organizing narrative concepts. In Jn 18.1-27, for example, the organizing concept seems to be the theme of Jesus as the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. In Jn 18.28-19.16a, the organizing concept seems to be the idea that Jesus is King. In Jn 19.16b-42, these two themes are repeated but with the additional unifying idea of Jesus-as-Paschal Lamb.

Symbols are also connective conceptual devices. As many theorists have shown, the word symbol derives etymologically from a Greek verb (*sumballein*) meaning "to put together"⁹⁵. Symbols are connecting links between two spheres, the sphere of the symbol itself (surface reality) and the sphere which the symbol represents (deep reality). For example, in Jn 19.23, the seamless tunic is a symbol of the unity of the church. In Jn 19.34, the water and the blood which flow from the pierced wound inflicted by the guard's spear are symbols of the life which Jesus, in death, paradoxically gives to the world.

Irony is a complex oppositional structure in which words or happenings can be interpreted at two different levels, a superficial level and a deep level. As Paul Duke has shown in his literary study of JOHN, irony is used repeatedly in the fourth gospel to lead the reader into that dimension of truth about Jesus which most of the characters *within* the narrative world seem to miss. The narrator of JOHN guides the implied reader into responding with understanding and even faith where certainly the Jews misunderstand and disbelieve. As Duke has said, "so crucial is this irony to the Johannine message that it may fairly be said, if we do not grasp the Irony we do not grasp the Gospel"⁹⁶. Examples of irony abound in the Johannine passion narrative. One of the most poignant is the moment when Peter chooses to warm himself beside the charcoal fire outside Annas'

house, whilst Jesus, the Light of the World, is being interrogated on the inside (Jn 18.15-27). The irony consists of the fact that the reader can see that Jesus should be the true source of Peter's warmth and light, whilst Peter chooses to depend on the charcoal fire and to side himself with the servants and soldiers.

NARRATOR AND POINT OF VIEW.

Paul Duke, like Alan Culpepper and David Wead before him, speaks of the narrator of JOHN "winking" at the reader²⁷. What this implies is that Johannine narrative is an act of communication between narrator and reader, and that the narrator figure is important in any appreciation of narrative. In JOHN we are aware of being told a story - we are aware of a narrating voice. The source of this transmission is the narrator, and the narrator in JOHN is the voice of the author within the universe which the gospel depicts. Though it is too much to say that he is omniscient (he is, after all, not a divine figure)²⁸, the narrator is a character who is both transcendent and immanent to the narrative world. Within that world, it is the narrator who provides temporal and spatial coordinates, who introduces characters, who indicates who is speaking, who interprets words and works, who describes, explains, addresses, announces, and so on. He makes no effort to hide his voice. There is no attempt to create the spell of telling the story "so vivaciously that the presence of the minstrel is forgotten"²⁹. Everywhere in JOHN the narrator works obviously - though not clumsily - to coax the reader round to the "point of view" or ideological stance which he embraces. That point of view is the enlightened post-resurrectional understanding of Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, and it is this understanding which undergirds the narrator's rhetorical strategy expressed in Jn 20.31. Any true analysis of Johannine narrative

must therefore include narrator and point of view in its programme, and must evaluate the extent to which the aim of 20.31 is achieved (i.e. the persuasiveness of the gospel's narrative Christology).

NARRATIVE ECHO EFFECTS.

Another aspect of Johannine narrative which is worthy of mention is the technique of repetition. Robert Alter describes biblical narrative as "an elaborately integrated system of repetitions, some dependent on the actual recurrence of phonemes, words or short phrases, others linked instead to the actions, images and ideas that are part of the world of the narrative"¹⁰⁰. As Alter explains, this habit of constantly restating material is hard for us to naturalize because we are so accustomed to modes of narration in which elements of repetition are made to seem far less obtrusive. Yet it is an important aspect of biblical narrative discourse and, in particular, of the gospel of John. In his study of Luke-Acts, Robert Tannehill describes such unifying repetitions of images, actions and themes as "narrative echo effects". These echo effects are patterns of recurrence in parts of a narrative which require an active reader-response. This reader-response consists of connecting the recurrent images, actions or themes into a Gestalt. When we come to our narrative reading of Jn 18.1-27, we shall be employing Tannehill's categories in order to show how the evangelist has expressed his story in such a way that echo effects are set up with the Good Shepherd discourse in John 10.

THE IDEAL NARRATIVE AUDIENCE.

Alan Culpepper has written a comprehensive chapter on the reader in JOHN so too many comments here would merely form footnotes to his work. In this study we shall be drawing on Peter Rabinowitz's distinction between

the four audiences one can find in a narrative text: 1) the actual audience (in JOHN's case, the contemporary reader); 2) the authorial audience (in JOHN's case, the proposed Johannine community); 3) the narrative audience (in JOHN's case, the audiences WITHIN JOHN's narrative world); 4) the ideal narrative audience (in JOHN's case, the reader who "believes the narrator, accepts his judgements, and appreciates his irony")¹⁰¹. We need to point out in this study that the ideal narrative audience in JOHN is not necessarily the same as JOHN's historical audience. The ideal narrative audience is a fictional construction - an author's image of what he ideally wants his actual readers to become. As Wayne Booth has remarked, "The author makes his readers"; he has in mind a "reader whose perceptions and norms match his own" and his story-telling craftsmanship is used in order to make his readers "see what they have never seen before"¹⁰². Thus, the ideal narrative audience throughout JOHN is an audience which has the benefit of the narrator's post-resurrectional hind-sight. It is an audience which knows truths about Jesus' words and works which the characters in the story, who do not have the advantage of the kind of pre-existent perspective offered in the gospel's prologue, cannot see. Only the beloved disciple understands the truth about Jesus in a way comparable to the ideal narrative audience and in this sense the beloved disciple, though an historical figure, can be said to be an embodiment of the ideal reader within the narrative world of Jesus' ministry.

NARRATIVE TIME.

One of the key concepts in our discussions of the truthfulness of JOHN in chapters four and eight will be the concept of narrative time. In this thesis we distinguish between three types of time sequence visible in JOHN. These derive from Gerard Genette, and they are STORY TIME, REAL TIME

and NARRATIVE TIME¹⁰³. The story time of JOHN is the plotted time; i.e. the time sequence in the narrative itself (a two-to-three year period in chapters 1-12, a period of one week in chapters 13-20, a morning in chapter 21). The real time in JOHN is the actual time which all the events depicted really took, which may have been longer or shorter than the three years the evangelist gives us in his story time. The narrative time of JOHN is the reading time; the time it would take to read the gospel in part or as a whole. Two distinctions need to be made here, the first between story time and real time, the second between story time and narrative time. The difference between story time and real time, between the temporality which JOHN provides and the actual chronology of Jesus' historical ministry is something which needs to be investigated using the method of historical criticism. The difference between story time and narrative time needs to be investigated using the method of narrative criticism. As Culpepper has shown very well¹⁰⁴, there is an obvious difference between the length of time described in the narrative and the length of time it would take to read the narrative. Where the difference is greatest (chapters 1-12) the narrative tempo is quickest. Where the difference is smallest (chapters 13-20), the narrative tempo is slowest.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

We have, in this last section, provided an outline of the first synchronic¹⁰⁵ orientation of narrative criticism. This first synchronic approach we have called "practical criticism". There are no binding rules about how to approach a gospel narrative in this perspective, but at least part of our aim will be to respond to the final form of John 18-19 as a story, and to seek to identify those narrative dynamics which evoke the reader-responses we experience. This will inevitably lead to a discussion

of content (summaries), characterization, plot and structure, and additionally to a consideration (where relevant) of other items in JOHN's narrative repertoire, such as implicit commentary and narrative echo effects. The advantage of such a narrative appreciation is that it reclaims the final form of the text as a narrative unity, it helps us to see how JOHN's portrait of Jesus is communicated to the reader, and it enables us to examine the significance and persuasiveness of the gospel's Christology. In the final analysis, the term "narrative Christology" may well prove to be the most apt description of the gospel genre yet suggested, especially since the frequent attempts to equate the gospel genre with either Graeco-Roman or Israelite-Jewish "biography" have not proved to be conclusive and have certainly not provided us with a consensus opinion¹⁰⁶. Narrative Christology commends itself as a description of the gospel genre because each of the gospels uses a fairly wide range of narrative devices in the pursuit of one particular goal: to demonstrate that "Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God" (John 20.31). Just how artfully this aim is achieved will become apparent in our narrative criticism of John 18-19 in the second part of this thesis.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER ONE.

1. D.Rhoads and D.Michie, MARK AS STORY, p.2.
2. In his GROWTH OF THE BIBLICAL TRADITION: THE FORM-CRITICAL METHOD (New York: Scribner's, 1960), Klaus Koch wrote that "properly understood, literary criticism can now only be considered as a branch, along with many others, of form criticism. It is that aspect of form criticism which is concerned with the transmission of books, tracing their development right back to their many written sources" (p.77).
3. M.Dibelius, FROM TRADITION TO GOSPEL, describes the synoptic gospels as "primitive Christian literature". "Without a doubt", he remarks, "these are unliterary writings" (p.2).
4. D.Rhoads, NARRATIVE CRITICISM AND THE GOSPEL OF MARK, pp.411-412: "Literary criticism is a broad field encompassing many approaches to a text, and only recently have biblical scholars begun to investigate the formal features of narrative in the texts of the Gospels, features which include aspects of the story-world of the narrative and the rhetorical techniques employed to tell the story. I shall refer to such investigative areas of literary criticism as "the literary study of narrative" or *narrative criticism*". Whilst no one denies that the gospels are narrative, many would disagree that they are "literature". That is why the term "narrative criticism" is to be preferred over and against "literary criticism".
5. Rhoads and Michie, MARK AS STORY, p.137.
6. E.Best, MARK, p.2.
7. Ibid, p.108.
8. Ibid, p.100.
9. Ibid, pp.112.
10. Ibid, p.141.
11. Ibid, p.118.
12. J.D.Kingsbury, MATTHEW AS STORY, p.vii.
13. Ibid, p.vii.
14. Ibid, p.p.vii.
15. Ibid, p.10.
16. Ibid, p.2.
17. Ibid, p.120. There are problems with this method of investigating the Matthean community. As Daniel Patte says in his structuralist commentary, THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW (Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1987),

"Matthew imagined an audience and made presuppositions concerning what it might or might not know. As we know from experience, this imagined audience is not necessarily the actual audience that we have in front of us. This means that we cannot assume that Matthew's Gospel directly reflects the actual situation of his church, and that the Gospel should be interpreted in terms of a reconstructed view of that church" (p.13).

18. R.C.Tannehill, NARRATIVE UNITY, p.1.

19. Ibid, p.1.

20. Ibid, p.1.

21. R.C.Tannehill, COMPOSITION AND DEVELOPMENT, p.217.

22. R.C.Tannehill, NARRATIVE UNITY, p.3.

23. R.A.Culpepper, ANATOMY, p.4.

24. Ibid, p.8.

25. Ibid, p.5.

26. Ibid, p.6.

27. W.Doty, in a review article on Culpepper's work in Interpretation 39.1, January 1985, wrote: "Future Johannine studies can only build upon the impressive synthesis of critical and interpretative perspectives Culpepper has constructed" (p.80). This thesis was started before Culpepper published his literary approach to JOHN, but nevertheless draws upon it and challenges it at certain points.

28. R.A.Culpepper, ANATOMY, p.3. Culpepper would see Bultmann as one of those literary archeologists who have so exhumed and disturbed the text that a holistic, aesthetic appreciation of JOHN was impossible. Bultmann's influence on Johannine scholarship has been immense, and it is his source-critical method which is responsible for the marked gap in literary approaches to JOHN between the early 1930's and the early 1970's (see bibliography).

29. Ibid, p.231.

30. Auerbach's chapter on Mark's Gospel was intended to place it in the tradition of realistic narrative in Western literature. As such, it put MARK in the company of fictional novels, which led subsequent biblical critics to assume that one could approach MARK with the same tools used on fictional novels. This thesis is the first work of NT scholarship to counter this uncritical tendency.

31. R.Scholes and R.Kellog, THE NATURE OF NARRATIVE, p.8: "in the middle of the twentieth century, our view of narrative literature is almost hopelessly novel-centred. The expectations which readers bring to narrative literary works are based on their experience with the novel". This is still

true at the end of the twentieth century - especially in NT narrative criticism.

32. T.Todorov, PRIMITIVE NARRATIVE, in POETICS OF PROSE (Oxford, Blackwell's, 1977) shows how arrogant it is to describe narratives such as the ODYSSEY as "primitive" in comparison with modern novels. He shows that the ODYSSEY possesses a different kind of sophistication which relates more to composition.

33. One of the major contributions of this thesis is that it leads us away from novel-based understandings of narrative in NT studies to an Old Testament-based understanding of narrative, deriving from Robert Alter's ART OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVE.

34. R.A.Culpepper, ANATOMY, pp.3-5.

35. See chapter four of this thesis.

36. See chapter three, section two of this thesis.

37. We shall point out on pp.102f that R.E.Brown is certainly guilty of turning the fourth gospel into an allegory of community history.

38. For a useful summary of New criticism, see Robert Detweiler's AFTER THE NEW CRITICISM, p.3 of ORIENTATION BY DISORIENTATION, ed. R.Spencer.

39. M.Sternberg, POETICS OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVE, p.1.

40. R.C.Tannehill, THE GOSPEL OF MARK AS NARRATIVE CHRISTOLOGY, p.60. Tannehill sees commissions as mandates given to characters within the narrative (such as Jesus' commission at his baptism).

41. Ibid, p.58.

42. E.F.Scott, THE FOURTH GOSPEL: ITS PURPOSE AND THEOLOGY (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1906), p.16.

43. P.C.Sands, LITERARY GENIUS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1932). p.49.

44. C.H.Dodd, ABOUT THE GOSPELS (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1950). p.41.

45. Theologischen Dissertationen, vol.4, Basel: Friedrich Reinhardt Kommissionsverlag, 1970.

46. Classical form criticism was not, however, an altogether non-literary method. In his MIRACLE STORIES OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN TRADITION (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1983), Gerd Theissen writes: "form criticism contains a synchronic element. It analyses literary-forms or genres, which is to say that it classifies similarities and connections between texts" (p.1).

47. E.Haenchen, JOHN. Vol.I, p.86. This is the kind of remark which one would expect from a German scholar influenced by Rudolf Bultmann.

48. R. Fortna, THE GOSPEL OF SIGNS, p.2.
49. For a very useful summary of the source-critical contributions of Fortna, Teeple, Schnackenburg, Becker and Nicol, see Robert Kysar's FOURTH EVANGELIST, pp.13-37.
50. B. Lindars, BEHIND THE FOURTH GOSPEL, pp.32-3.
51. E. Schweizer, EGO EIMI (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, 1939) and E. Ruckstuhl, DIE LITERARISCHE EINHEIT DES JOHANNES-EVANGELIUMS (Freiburg: Paulus, 1951).
52. B. Lindars, BEHIND THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.33.
53. J. A. T. Robinson, PRIORITY, p.16.
54. S. Smalley, IN JOHN: EVANGELIST AND INTERPRETER, provides a very useful summary of the aporias in JOHN on pp.98-100. He identifies ten roughnesses or inconsistencies: 1.29-34 with 3.25-30, 3.22 with 2.23, 4.54 with 2.23, the geographical sequence of John 4-7, 7.3-5 with 2.23 and 5.1-9, 7.8 with 7.10, 8.31 with 8.37, 13.36 with 16.5, 14.31 with chapters 15-17, the structural and geographical interruption between John 20 and the epilogue in John 21. These aporias do not however add up to the vast number which Robert Fortna feels are present.
55. M. de Jonge, JESUS: "the present author is very skeptical about the possibility of delineating the literary sources in the Fourth Gospel and does not share the optimism displayed by some of his colleagues when they try to distinguish between source and redaction. In many cases we cannot possibly know what the redactor had in front of him and, consequently, we shall have to take him seriously as an author, i.e., as a composer in his own right" (p.viii).
56. See, for example, the comments on the sources of JOHN in G. C. Nicholson's DEATH AS DEPARTURE, pp.13-15. Nicholson quotes de Jonge on p.15 as support for his emphasis upon the final form on JOHN, and for his rejection of source criticism.
57. D. A. Carson, CURRENT SOURCE CRITICISM OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.428.
58. R. Kysar, THE FOURTH EVANGELIST, p.33.
59. Students coming to JOHN for the first time are led to think of this evolutionary hypothesis as a recent contribution to Johannine scholarship. Robert Kysar traces "developmental theories of composition" back to Boismard's L'EVOLUTION DU THEME ESCHATOLOGIQUE DANS LES TRADITIONS JOHANNIQUES in 1961 (see p.39, footnote 1 of THE FOURTH EVANGELIST). However, Mabel Roberta Carter's LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS AND COMPOSITION OF JOHN, which she submitted in 1931, draws heavily on Garvie's THE BELOVED DISCIPLE which distinguishes between the Witness (W) of the gospel, the Evangelist (E) and the Redactor (R). Garvie published his book in 1922! Is this not the same scheme as our J1, J11, J111?
60. R. E. Brown, JOHN, vol. I, pp.lxxxvii-lxxxviii.

61. Ibid, p.lxxxviii.
62. Just as it is Shakespeare's imagination which provides dramatic unity and artistry to plays such as TITUS ANDRONICUS, or HENRY VIII, or PERICLES, where there has not only been a conscious, artistic use of sources but also evidence of other hands at work.
63. L.Ryken, THE GOSPEL AS A LITERARY FORM, p.291.
64. One of the first and possibly the most influential works to explore this theme was Josef Blank's KRISIS. UNTERSUCHUNGEN ZUR JOHANNEISCHEN CHRISTOLOGIE UND ESCHATOLOGIE (Freiburg: Lambertus, 1964). Blank's argument (which is impossible to summarise in a footnote) is that the fourth evangelist has deliberately exploited the two connotations of the word *krisis* throughout his gospel (judgement and decision).
65. A.E.Harvey, JESUS ON TRIAL. p.14.
66. V.C.Pfitzer, THE CORONATION OF THE KING, p.2.
67. R.C.Tannehill, THE GOSPEL OF MARK AS NARRATIVE CHRISTOLOGY, p.57.
68. Practical criticism is associated with I.A.Richards, who wrote a book called PRACTICAL CRITICISM (London, 1929), and F.R.Leavis, who stressed the value of the "close reading" of texts. Practical criticism is the systematic, detailed analytic interpretation of a literary text *on its own terms*, i.e. in isolation from its historical or cultural context. The kind of text-immanent practical criticism of JOHN's narrative we have in mind is described in chapter one of this work.
69. M.Sternberg, POETICS OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVE, p.15.
70. R.Alter, ART OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVE, p.131.
71. R.Fowler, WHO IS "THE READER" IN READER RESPONSE CRITICISM. *Semeia* 32, 1986, pp.1-2.
72. S.Chatman, STORY AND DISCOURSE, p.19.
73. For the original diagram, see *ibid* p.26.
74. See J.Culler's PURSUIT OF SIGNS, pp.186-7. Culler's chapter is entitled, "STORY AND DISCOURSE IN THE ANALYSIS OF NARRATIVE".
75. See A.Rodway's THE CRAFT OF CRITICISM (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp.176-7 for a useful though brief discussion of the inseparability of form and content in literary criticism.
76. J.A.T.Robinson, PRIORITY. pp.300f.
77. L.Ryken, HOW TO READ THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE, pp.68-9.
78. S.Chatman, STORY AND DISCOURSE, p.44.

79. Ibid, p.53.
80. See footnote 15 and Culpepper's ANATOMY, pp.102-3, which began the trend.
81. R.A.Culpepper, ANATOMY, p.102.
82. S.Rimmon-Kenan, NARRATIVE FICTION, pp.40-41. Joseph Ewen's theory of characterisation is presented on p.41.
83. D.Daiches, CHARACTER. p.351.
84. R.Alter, ART OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVE, p.116.
85. Ibid, p.116.
86. Ibid, pp.114-5.
87. F.Matera, THE PLOT OF MATTHEW'S GOSPEL, p.235.
88. P.Ricoeur, TIME AND NARRATIVE, vol I, pp.65f.
89. T.Hughes, *Thistles*, in SELECTED POEMS, London. Faber & Faber, 1972. p.59
90. P.Ricoeur, TIME AND NARRATIVE, vol I. p.ix.
91. R.A.Culpepper, ANATOMY, p.86.
92. C.Galland, NEW TESTAMENT AND STRUCTURALISM, p.315.
93. R.A.Culpepper, ANATOMY, pp.151f.
94. G.Theissen, MIRACLE STORIES IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN TRADITION, (Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1983), p.7.
95. R.A.Culpepper, ANATOMY, p.182.
96. P.Duke, IRONY IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.
97. Ibid, p.156.
98. R.A.Culpepper started the trend of calling the Johannine narrator "omniscient". ANATOMY, p.21.
99. P.Lubbock, POINT OF VIEW, p.231.
100. R.Alter, ART OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVE, p.95.
101. R.A.Culpepper, ANATOMY, p.207.
102. Ibid, p.204.
103. Ibid, pp.53-4.

104. Ibid, p.54f.

105. By "synchronic approach" we mean a text-immanent approach which regards the examination of final form as valid.

106. My own feeling about the genre of the gospels is this: that comparative literary criticism is unlikely to discover a literary form in ancient literature which corresponds exactly with the gospel form as a whole. David Aune, in his *NEW TESTAMENT IN ITS LITERARY ENVIRONMENT* (Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1987), gets close to a useful generic classification of the gospels as "a distinctive type of ancient biography combining (to oversimplify slightly) Hellenistic form and function with Jewish content" (p.22). However, individual examples of the kinds of literature which Aune claims have been eclectically combined into the gospel form are just as noticeable for their differences as for their similarities. If there is an adequate classification for the four gospels, then it is to be found in Tannehill's simple but pregnant designation, *NARRATIVE CHRISTOLOGY* - which, unfortunately for the genre critics, is not a literary form which readily suggests any comparisons. In the final analysis, comparative literary criticism of the gospels is done more profitably on individual parts of the gospel narratives than on the gospels as a whole. This much has been argued since Bultmann's *DIE GESCHICHTE DER SYNOPTISCHEN TRADITION* (FRLANT, N.F. 12: Gottingen, Vandenhoeck, 1921 - see pp.227-8). Thus, in chapter six of this thesis, we shall be looking at the genre of JOHN's passion narrative, *without necessarily committing ourselves to the view that the whole gospel fits the genre in question.*

CHAPTER TWO. JOHN AS NARRATIVE PERFORMANCE.

Section One. THE PERMANENT STRUCTURES OF NARRATIVE.

The first major task of narrative criticism is to analyze what has been called the "surface structure" of the text. In chapter one we showed how this involved analysis of plot, time, implicit commentary, characterization, narrator, point of view, and so on. However there is also a "deep structure" behind every narrative and the discovery of these deep structures is the province of structuralism. General structural analysis of narrative derives ultimately from Ferdinand de Saussure's pioneering work in the area of linguistics at the turn of this century'. The countless popular summaries of both Saussure and the development of structuralism all agree that Saussurian linguistics was "pioneering" because it questioned the presuppositions behind previous linguistic philosophies. The general philosophical perspective which Saussure inherited was one in which the world was seen to consist of independently existing objects which are both clearly visible and easily classifiable. Saussure saw, however, (a) that it is impossible to perceive individual entities with complete objectivity; (b) that there is a relationship and not a detachment between the observer and the observed, and (c) that the world is made up of relationships rather than things. As Terence Hawkes has pointed out, this emphasis on "relationships" represents the great change in perception at the beginning of the century and forms the basis of all structuralist thinking. The new perception recognized that "the full significance of any entity or experience cannot be perceived unless and until it is integrated into the structure of which it forms a part"². What is now of interest are the permanent structures into which all things fit .

Fredric Jameson has rightly described structuralism as "an explicit search for the permanent structures of the mind itself, the organisational categories and forms through which the mind is able to experience the world"³. This emphasis upon permanent structures is first evident in Saussure's complex linguistic theory. His COURSE IN GENERAL LINGUISTICS (1915) presents the argument that language should be studied "not only in terms of its individual parts, and not only diachronically, but also in terms of the relationship between those parts, and synchronically: that is, in terms of its current adequacy"⁴. In short, he proposed that a language should be studied as a *Gestalt*, a unified "field", a self-sufficient system, as we actually experience it now⁵. Previous linguistic philosophies had been too preoccupied with the historical, evolutionary development of language (the diachronic emphasis). Saussure, on the other hand, insisted that language is a system which is complete at every moment, no matter what developments take place. This system Saussure called *LANGUE*, a concept which he distinguished from *PAROLE*. "Langue" signifies the abstract set of rules, the permanent structures, the grammar of language. A "Parole" is the individual, concrete speech-utterance which we make in obedience to that grammar. "Langue" is a closed system of interrelationships which can be perceived synchronically. "Parole" is an individual manifestation of that code or structure. *LANGUE* is like the rules of chess; a *PAROLE* is like an individual move⁶.

Structuralism began with Saussure's attempt to discover and describe the permanent, deep structures of language. It was the Russian folklorist Vladimir Propp who first applied a broadly-speaking structuralist approach to narrative. In his *MORPHOLOGY OF THE FOLKTALE* (1928), Propp endeavoured to establish a scientific explanation of the

way Russian fairy-tales are composed. For Propp, the highest goal of any science is to discover laws, and this was precisely his aim in the more limited area of the fairy-tale genre⁷. The very word "morphology" connoted this since it referred to a branch of the natural sciences whose abiding aim had been to provide a holistic description of the overarching scheme that embraces all nature. On the basis that "the realms of nature and of man are not isolated from one another", that "they share some common laws"⁸, Propp tried to find the overarching scheme that embraces all fairy tales. After close inspection of 100 such tales, Propp began to notice that there were significant constants or "significant interchangeable variables"⁹ in them. Underneath the multiplicity, there seemed to be a unity which could be determined logically. For example, in one story, a king gives an eagle to a hero and the eagle carries the hero away to another kingdom. In another story, a princess gives Ivan a ring from which some men magically appear in order to whisk him away to another place. In both stories, though the characters have different names, the same action is performed - namely, a gift causing a transfer¹⁰.

What is the permanent structure behind the narrative genre known as the Russian fairy tale ? Propp reckoned that he had found a deep structure or grammar of possible relationships which all fairy tales obey. This structure was composed of a limited number of possible actions which the characters of the stories perform (e.g. the giving of a gift effecting a transfer of the protagonist). These actions Propp called "functions" and their principal characteristic was simply that they did not change. Whilst the names of the characters in the above illustration seem variable (a king and a hero// a princess and Ivan), the actual function is essentially the same. As Claude Brémont has put

it, "the invariant is the function that a particular event, by its very happening, fulfills in the course of the narrative. The variable is the concrete manifestation chosen for the production and circumstances of this event. What counts therefore is to know what a character does and what function it fulfills"¹¹. Propp chose to determine each narrative function through a "specific comparative analysis of the material"¹². He discerned each function through a painstaking process of "comparison, of correlation, of abstraction of a logical structure from thousands of cases"¹³. His method was neither arbitrary nor subjective, it was meticulously empiricist, and the permanent or "monotypical" structure which Propp inferred from his research turned out to be a kind of Russian alphabet of thirty one possible functions which involved seven types of characters.

The second seminal application of a structuralist approach to a narrative form was made by Claude Lévi-Strauss, who used Saussure's linguistic system in his study of myths¹⁴. Lévi-Strauss believed that the rules which govern myths and the rules which govern language emerge from identical unconscious structures. For Lévi-Strauss, the unconscious structure behind myth is the tendency to think in oppositions and the tendency to resolve such oppositions - a mental operation analogous to the one described by Saussure, in which the mind grasps meaning through the recognition of differences. This stress on "unconscious structures" means that Lévi-Strauss' analyses are not characterised by a careful concern for surface stories, however interesting these may be in themselves. Nor do they exhibit any central interest in the characters and their actions in terms of their psychological depth and verisimilitude. Lévi-Strauss is interested in the permanent structure, the *langue* if you like, behind mythical stories. This *langue* is

established through the discovery of recurrent combinations of constant features or "mythemes"¹⁵. These combinations obey the rules of a kind of transcendental grammar, a universal *mythologique* which is manifested in the resolution of things existing in binary opposition¹⁶. When reading Lévi-Strauss, one therefore finds a concentrated preoccupation with the degree of mediation between certain universal contrasts, such as Immortal/Mortal, Male/Female, Parent/Child, and so on.

The systems developed by Vladimir Propp and Claude Lévi-Strauss must be fully appreciated if we are to understand the examples of structural exegesis we find in biblical studies. To put it into the language of structuralism, we shall not be able to comprehend the individual "paroles" (examples of structural exegesis) unless we have penetrated their "langue" (the methodological systems from which they ultimately derive). As far as biblical narrative is concerned, most examples of structural exegesis resemble either Vladimir Propp's method or Claude Lévi-Strauss's method. They are either concerned with structures related to plot or structures unrelated to plot, such as the mind's innate tendency to resolve binary oppositions¹⁷. A word of qualification needs to be added here, however. It needs to be stated that the structural exegesis which derives from Propp's "morphology" can sometimes resemble A.J. Greimas' much more ambitious adaptation of Propp's system¹⁸. It is possible to describe Greimas' structural approach to narrative as a third methodology distinctive enough to be discussed in its own right. Greimas' approach is, after all, distinguished from Propp's functional analysis by being called "actantial analysis"¹⁹. However, most commentators place Greimas firmly in the tradition of Vladimir Propp, so we have chosen to introduce him

at this juncture. Greimas came up with the following model, which he regarded as the permanent structure behind all narratives:

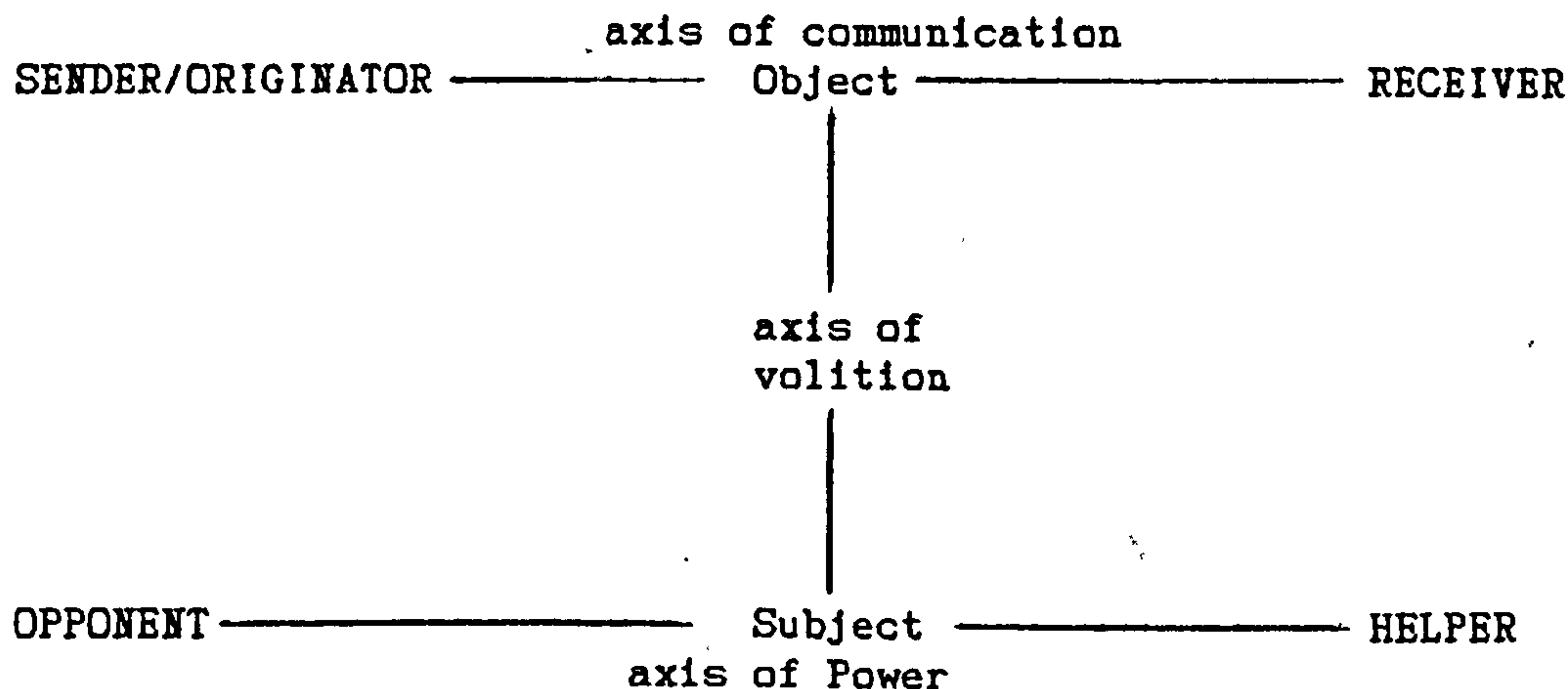


Figure 4.

This diagram reveals six different character poles of narrative (subject, object, sender, receiver, helper and opponent) and three functional axes (communication, power and volition). A story is usually begun when a sender tells a receiver to undertake some task. The volitional axis represents this quest. The power axis, the struggle involved in its execution. Thus, a story in which a king sends a prince to find his daughter, and in which the prince is waylaid by bandits before being helped by a magic horse to his prize, would be schematized by Greimas as follows:

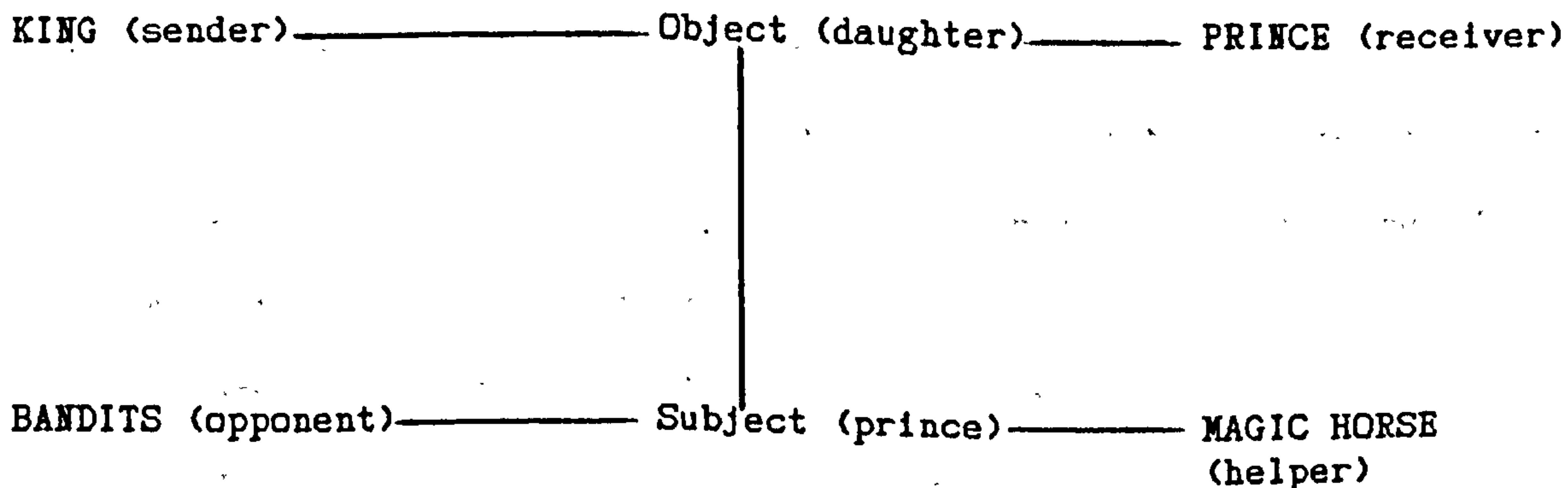


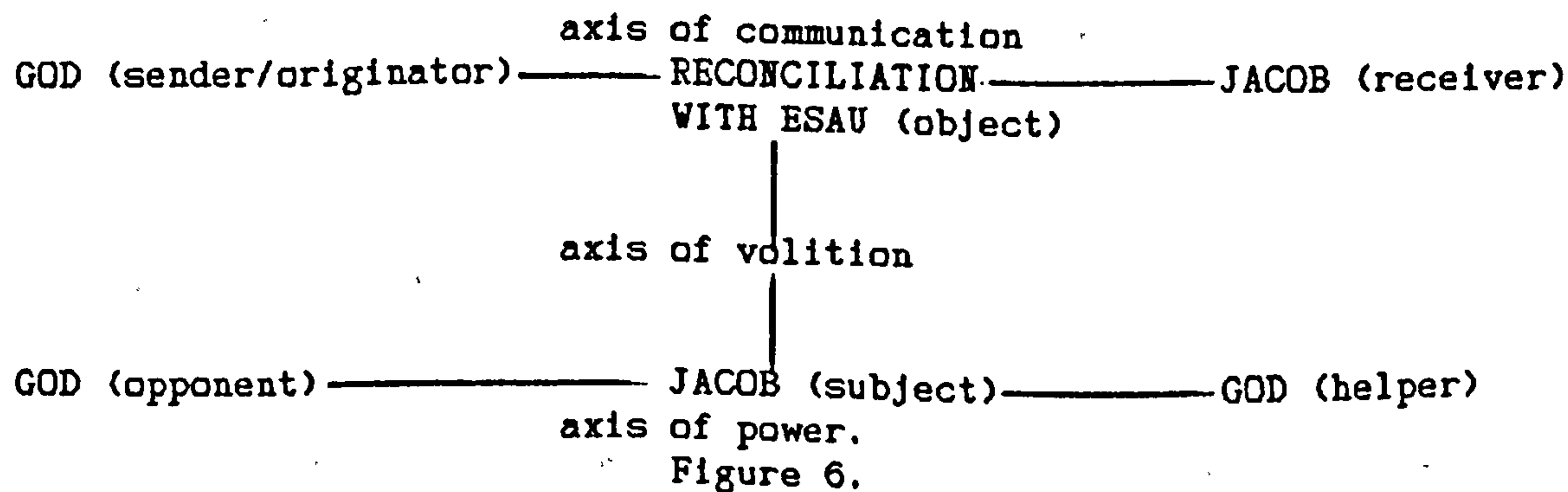
Figure 5.

The first experiments in biblical structural exegesis were practised on Genesis, perhaps because it was felt that this, of all the books of the Bible, most closely resembles the genres of fairy tale and myth. The first person to use the method deriving from Propp and Greimas was the French structuralist, Roland Barthes. His essay entitled, "The Struggle with the Angel: A Structural analysis of Genesis 32: 22-32" (1971), was to become one of the most celebrated examples of structuralist literary criticism. In an earlier essay entitled, "An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives" (1966), Barthes had proposed both the universality of narrative and the universality of the permanent structures behind narratives. "The narratives of the world are numberless"²⁰, he wrote. They can be spoken or written, they can be found in myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, and so on. There appears to be an "almost infinite diversity of forms"²¹. "Nowhere is nor has there been a people without narrative. All classes, all human groups, have their narratives", "narrative is international, transhistorical, transcultural; it is simply there, like life itself"²². Furthermore, all narratives obey a fundamental narrative grammar. Just as sentences obey a system of rules, so do narratives, because "a narrative is a long sentence"²³. Behind and within the great variety of narratives in the world, there is "an atemporal logic lying behind the temporality of narrative"²⁴.

In his essay, "The Struggle with the Angel", Barthes attempts to test the implications of this grammatical approach to narrative. He begins with a sequential analysis of the narrative itself. In this part of his essay he simply "names" or classifies the "indices" of the narrative, and to these he gives the metalinguistic terms "The Crossing", "The Struggle" and "The Namings"²⁵. In the second part of his

essay, Barthes subjects the narrative to the kinds of approach established by Propp and Greimas. The story itself is about Jacob's struggle with a man or an angel who turns out, at the moment of the dénouement, to be God. Barthes begins by defining the actants (characters) in the tale in terms of their functions. As far as Barthes is concerned, they are stock items from the world of folk-tale plots. Jacob is the hero who is on a quest, one of the commonest of all folk-tale plots. God stands behind the events of the story as the SENDER or ORIGINATOR of this quest. The man with whom Jacob wrestles is his OPPONENT, since he is the one who waylays the hero and tries to prevent him from accomplishing his mission.

Barthes argues that, at the moment of the struggle, a number of narrative developments are possible. The Originator/Sender (God) could step in and help the hero defeat his Opponent. A magical Helper could appear to whisk Jacob away. But what actually occurs is in effect quite peculiar and unexpected. At the moment of discovery, Jacob recognizes that his Opponent is none other than God Himself! In narratological terms, the Receiver realizes that the Sender and the Opponent and the Helper are all one and the same! It is God who sends Jacob down the axis of volition, and it is God who meets Jacob on the axis of power. In Greimas' diagrammatical terms, the story looks like this:



The diagram accentuates the surprise factor here. As Barthes suggests, "that the sender be the opponent is very rare"²⁶; it is bound to surprise. In fact, there is only one kind of narrative which can present this paradoxical form: "narratives relating an act of blackmail"²⁷, and it is this that makes the reader recognize how audacious the tale is, both structurally and theologically. Structurally, it seems to break a rule of folk-tale grammar. Theologically, it seems to imply the kind of radical monotheism which will not permit the existence of an opposing spiritual power. Barthes structural analysis reveals how and why Genesis 32:22-32 is a tale of the unexpected.

Whilst Roland Barthes was the first to apply the method deriving from Propp and Greimas in biblical studies, Edmund Leach was the first to apply the method deriving from Claude Lévi-Strauss. In his essay, "Genesis as Myth" (1969), Leach used Lévi-Strauss' structural analysis of myth in order to highlight the permanent mythical structures behind Genesis. Leach agreed with Lévi-Strauss that "myth is constantly setting up opposing categories"²⁸. Myth has a "binary structure"; it "first discriminates between gods and men, and then becomes preoccupied with the relations and intermediaries which link men and gods together"²⁹. "In every myth system", Leach continues, "we will find a persistent sequence of binary discriminations as between human/superhuman, mortal/immortal, male/female, legitimate/illegitimate, good/bad...followed by a 'mediation' of the paired categories thus distinguished"³⁰. Right the way through Genesis, Leach claims that we are presented with common opposites: Heaven/Earth, Light/Darkness, Man/Garden, Tree of Life/Tree of Death, Unity (Eden)/ Duality (outside Eden), Gardener (Cain)/Herdsman (Abel), and so on. As Leach concludes, "every myth is one of a complex" and "any pattern which occurs in one

myth will recur, in the same or other variations, in other parts of the complex²³. There is a structure which is common to all variations and that structure lies behind and within Genesis. Genesis, like all other myths, is an observable phenomenon expressive of unobservable realities - namely the permanent structures of myth.

We cannot claim to have been exhaustive either in our account of structuralism or in our summaries of the work of Propp, Greimas, Lévi-Strauss, Barthes and Leach. A brief evaluation of the methodological soundness and practical usefulness of the structural analysis of narrative will follow in the next section, when we discuss its use in recent NT studies. As a conclusion to the present section, we want to emphasize six important principles: (1) that structuralism in general and structural exegesis in particular are both concerned with the discovery and description of transindividual, permanent structures; (2) that the permanent structure according to Lévi-Strauss is revealed in the mediation of binary opposites; (3) that the permanent narrative structure according to Propp and Greimas is a grammar of limited actants and functions; (4) that structural analysis of narrative will most commonly follow either Lévi-Strauss' concentration upon deep mental structures, or Propp's and Greimas' concentration upon deep plot structures; (5) that structural exegesis alone can elicit the kinds of insights about which Barthes and Leach have written; (6) that structural exegesis of biblical narrative is now an unavoidable feature of procedure in the exegete's holistic appreciation of the final form of a text.

One word of warning needs to be uttered at this stage, however. One of the problems with structural exegesis is that it contains a great deal of technological jargon which can sometimes put more traditional

biblical critics off the method altogether. The cause of structural exegesis is certainly not helped, for example, by having some of its key concepts in French and German. It is for this reason that we have decided not to use the words *langue* and *parole* in this thesis and have chosen instead to use Noam Chomsky's equivalent terms, *competence* and *performance* (ASPECTS OF THE THEORY OF SYNTAX: 1965)³². Like Saussure, Chomsky distinguished between the underlying system of rules in language and the actual, observed use of language. The underlying system of rules he called *competence*, and the actual, observed use of language he called *performance*. The heading of this chapter is JOHN AS NARRATIVE PERFORMANCE, and it is our aim to use to Chomsky's concepts of competence and performance (rather than Saussure's concepts of *langue* and *parole*) in our investigation of John 18-19 as a specific linguistic performance of an underlying system of literary rules (competence). When we talk of the fourth gospel as a performance text, we are arguing that JOHN as a whole is a manifestation of a set of psycho-social conditions and rules. Put more simply, we are claiming that the evangelist, in expressing and structuring his Jesus-material in the way he did, was consciously or even unconsciously obeying certain narrative rules inherent in his mind and in the collective consciousness of his social group. What those rules were in the case of the Johannine passion narrative we shall see in chapter six.

CHAPTER TWO

Section Two. THE STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF GOSPEL NARRATIVE.

In section one, we described the contours of structuralist narratology and the emergence of structural exegesis of Old Testament narrative. The two questions we wish to ask in the present section are: (1) What kinds of structural exegesis have been practised on NT narrative ? (2) How sound is the method ? In answering the first question, it is interesting to note that certain examples of form criticism bear some resemblance to the functional analysis of narrative deriving from Vladimir Propp. When form critics came to analyze the pre-canonical, synoptic transmission of Jesus-stories, they found that there were stock features in the stories themselves. For example, when Werner Kelber looks at what he calls *polarisation stories* (exorcisms), he finds a constant tripartite pattern of CONFRONTATION/ EXPULSION/ACCLAMATION in narratives of this type³³. The difference between these forms and structuralist taxonomies is the fact that the latter depict deep and universal structures whilst the former depict typical, surface "forms". Technically, however, it would be possible to begin this section with a detailed description of form criticism as proto-structural exegesis of the kind introduced by Vladimir Propp. This should not altogether surprise us because both Propp and the form critics were working on what we might term "oral literature".

What obvious examples of Lévi-Straussian and Proprian structural exegesis do we have in NT studies ? Let us look at two case-studies, the first resembling the approach of Lévi-Strauss and Leach, the second resembling that of Propp, Greimas and Barthes. Much of the structural exegesis which has so far been attempted in NT studies has used the gospel of Mark as its text. Our first case-study supports this general

statement. Elizabeth Malbon's *NARRATIVE SPACE AND MYTHIC MEANING IN MARK* (1986) is a structural exegesis of MARK based on Lévi-Strauss' principles. Malbon begins by outlining the nature of her investigation. "The present study", she writes, "is marked by a concern for the Markan Gospel as a literary and theological whole, and for its narrative space as a system of relationships"³⁴. The methodology she uses is "an adaptation of the methodology of the French structural anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss for analyzing myth"³⁵. Lévi-Straussian analysis understands myth as a narrative which operates to mediate irreconcilable differences. Though MARK "is not, strictly speaking, a myth", Malbon argues that "a mythic structure may also be operative in a text like MARK"³⁶. As Malbon continues, "the unique contribution the present study seeks to make is twofold: to broaden understanding of Markan narrative space by considering *all spatial references* and to deepen understanding of Markan space by considering the *system of interrelations* of these references"³⁷.

Malbon proposes that there are three types of relations that constitute the Markan spatial order: "geopolitical (named regions, cities, towns), topographical (physical features of the earth, such as the sea, wilderness, mountains), and architectural (human-made structures, such as houses, synagogues, the Temple"³⁸. The first step in Malbon's analysis consists of a detailed description of all the narrative facts which relate to "space", and of isolating their relations. This leads her to compose elaborate tables listing references to place names like Galilee and Judaea, references to land and sea, heaven and earth, wilderness and towns, and finally references to tombs and buildings, houses and palaces, synagogues and Temple, interior and exterior. Her second step is to analyze the SEQUENCE in which these

references occur, so that we see, for example, that Galilee is the dominant geopolitical location in the opening portion of MARK, whilst Jerusalem is the stage for the closing third. The third step involves an investigation into the latent structure by which all these relations are organized. That latent, mental structure is the mythic process of opposition and mediation. We have sea opposed to land, foreign land opposed to Jewish homeland, Judea opposed to Galilee, and so on. As far as mythic meaning is concerned, these correspond to the universal contrast of chaos/order or unfamiliar/familiar in myths. What is interesting in MARK is the degree to which these binary oppositions are mediated.

A good example of the fruits of Malbon's method can be seen if we look at one aspect of her structural exegesis of *architectural* space in MARK³⁹. Malbon finds twelve categories in this architectural suborder: synagogue, house, door, roof, tomb, Temple, buildings, housetop, guest room, courtyard, forecourt, and praetorium. Particularly interesting is the dynamic relating to house and synagogue. Malbon begins by discovering that there are nineteen references to OIKIA/OIKOS and eight references to SYNAGOGE in MARK. She then discerns that, even though "the initial architectural mode of the Gospel of Mark is 'in the synagogue', the fact is that "the dominant architectural marker of the Gospel of Mark is *house*"⁴⁰. Throughout MARK, "Jesus is often reported to be in his home or in a house teaching or healing"⁴¹. For Malbon, there is a contrast in MARK between house and synagogue: "a synagogue, of course, is a religious space; a sacred space; in relation to it a house, a residential space, is profane"⁴². The two architectural terms stand in a binary opposition which, in mythical terms, should be understood as an antithesis between sacred and profane. The mediation

between house and synagogue is manifest in "the takeover of the functions of one by the other"⁴³. From chapter 6 onwards, the house becomes the centre of sacred teaching, replacing the synagogue as it were. As Malbon concludes: "In terms of the fundamental opposition underlying the architectural schema, the sacred realm is inadequate to contain Jesus' "new teaching" (1.27), and it overflows into the profane realm"⁴⁴.

Our second case-study of structural exegesis of NT narrative also takes MARK at its text. However, it is structural exegesis after the fashion of Propp, Greimas and Barthes, not Lévi-Strauss and Leach. George Nicklesburg's *GENRE AND FUNCTION OF THE MARKAN PASSION NARRATIVE* approaches Mark 15-16 from a holistic perspective. Nicklesburg is not primarily interested in theological motivation (unlike Kelber), nor in literary themes (unlike Juel and Matera⁴⁵) but with the genre of MARK's passion narrative, with the "question of generic influences in the formation of the passion narrative"⁴⁶. His view is that Mark 15-16 is based on a particular generic model, "the stories of Persecution and Vindication in Jewish Literature"⁴⁷. These stories are to be found in the Joseph narratives in Genesis 37ff, the story of Ahikar, the Book of Esther, Daniel 3 and 6, Susanna, and Wisdom of Solomon 2,4-5. "All the aforementioned stories are characterised by a common theme: the rescue and vindication of a persecuted innocent person or persons"⁴⁸. As Nicklesburg continues, "this theme is emplotted by means of a limited number of narrative elements or components, most of them describing "actions", a few of them, motivations or emotions"⁴⁹. These components perform specific functions in the flow and logic of the narrative. They are named as INTRODUCTION, PROVOCATION, CONSPIRACY, DECISION, TRUST, OBEDIENCE, ACCUSATION, TRIAL, CONDEMNATION, PROTEST, PRAYER, ASSISTANCE,

ORDEAL, REACTIONS, RESCUE, VINDICATION, EXALTATION, INVESTITURE, ACCLAMATION, REACTIONS, and PUNISHMENT.

Having established the basic structure of all stories concerning the rescue and vindication of persecuted innocents, Nicklesburg proceeds to analyze Mark 15-16 as a story of persecution and vindication. As far as Nicklesburg is concerned, there is a formal consistency in the stories he studies, and most of the formal components of the genre are present in the Markan passion narrative. Though some of the components are more explicit than others (CHOICE/TRUST/OBEDIENCE are only suggested), there is clearly PROVOCATION in Jesus' cleansing of the Temple and the anointing in Bethany, there is CONSPIRACY in the behaviour of the chief priests, scribes and Judas, there are two TRIALS and ACCUSATIONS, there are plenty of REACTIONS (though this label is large enough to cover almost any narrative action), there is ASSISTANCE in Pilate's attempt to release Jesus, there is CONDEMNATION, INVESTITURE, ACCLAMATION, the ORDEAL, PRAYER, DEATH in Jesus' final hours, there is VINDICATION in the rending of the Temple curtain and ACCLAMATION in the centurion's confession. The investigation reveals that almost all the components of the genre are present in the Markan passion narrative⁵⁰. Indeed, many of these components are doubled. Thus, just as Propp had discovered a morphology of Russian fairy tales, Nicklesburg discovers a morphology of Jewish persecution/vindication stories. The resemblances between the methods of Nicklesburg and Propp are quite remarkable⁵¹. They are less noticeable between Nicklesburg and Greimas, but then Daniel and Aline Patte's STRUCTURAL EXEGESIS (1978) had already examined the Markan passion narrative using Greimas' methodology⁵².

What are the limitations and strengths in these structural approaches to NT narratives ? The following seem pertinent:

1) Structural exegesis of the NT has a very ambiguous and sometimes even antagonistic attitude towards historical criticism. Propp is adamant that one cannot separate structural from historical research; "nor can one place them in opposition". For Propp, "the comparative study of plots opens up broad historical perspectives", since one is interested in "the historical interconnections between the plots"⁵³. However, in spite of Propp's insistence, structural exegesis of biblical narratives has tended completely to ignore the historical or diachronic aspect of these texts. In its emphasis upon the final form, it suppresses all consideration of pretextual transmission. In its post-structuralist suspicions concerning the relationship between signifier and signified, it has neglected the referential dimension of historical narratives. In its heavy preoccupation with the deep structures of the mind, it has tended not to ask whether structure or narrativity is a characteristic of temporality, of experience, of history. Alfred Johnson may well be right when he claims that "structuralism does not attack history per se but a particular kind of history" - the "Hegelian evolutionary scheme of history which makes Western culture the norm against which other cultures are to be judged"⁵⁴ - but the fact is, that in practice, the emphasis upon synchrony nearly always suppresses diachrony. Leach treats Genesis as myth, Barthes treats Genesis 32:22-32 as a fairy tale. Malbon claims that she has no antipathy towards historical criticism and yet omits historical considerations. Only Nicklesburg wants to ask questions about the sources behind Mark 15-16.

2) There is an arbitrariness and subjectivity about some structural classifications. Part of the structural exegete's procedure involves the identification and naming of binary oppositions and/or basic genre components. Yet it is precisely in this very act of labelling that structural exegesis sometimes falls apart. For example, when Edmund Leach proposes that Orpheus rescues Eurydice from Hades by means of music, but loses her because of silence, it seems that the desire for a binary opposition has suppressed the obvious explanation. Orpheus quite plainly loses Eurydice because he turns round! ⁵⁵ Similarly, it is very easy to be subjective when moving from the narrative under scrutiny to the proposed generic structure of which it forms a part. Consider the two following definitions, one of epic plots, the other of romance plots: (a) "These (epic) plots are episodic, and present the deeds (or gestes) of a hero in some chronological sequence, possibly beginning with his birth, probably ending with his death" ⁵⁶. (b) A romance presents a successful quest with three main stages: "the preliminary minor adventures; the crucial struggle, usually some kind of battle in which either the hero or his foe, or both, must die; and the exaltation of the hero" ⁵⁷. If one was taking a holistic view of JOHN's plot sequence, one could infer that JOHN was a performance either of the epic or the romance generic paradigms. The process of labelling in structural exegesis therefore requires methodological rigour and integrity. Even in Nicklesburg's essay, the event labels are so general that one feels that, like horoscope statements, they could cover just about any eventuality.

3) Structural exegetes have not recognized the limitations of the interpretative models which they employ. For example, Greimas' actantial

model for the interpretation of *all* narratives is quite clearly *not* as versatile as its discoverer wished. Whilst it works very well in the context of smaller and simpler narrative units, such as a folk-tales or myths, its usefulness in longer and more complex narratives is highly questionable. For example, when Daniel and Aline Patte try to use it in their structural exegesis of the Markan passion narrative, they find it impossible to fit the whole of Mark 15-16 onto the one semiotic square. Instead, they are reduced to applying it to much smaller narrative units with the result that their book is really just an almost indecipherable plethora of actantial diagrams⁵⁸. If this is what happens in the context of two chapters of a gospel, it is almost unthinkable what might happen in the context of a long and sophisticated modern novel. Structural exegetes need to remember Corina Galland's remark about Greimas' model, that "it is difficult or artificial to apply this schema systematically to all texts"⁵⁹. Perhaps a more fruitful way forward is suggested by Propp and Nicklesburg. One should perhaps seek to penetrate the generic structure of which individual narratives (such as John 18-19) are manifestations, instead of adhering to some improbable notion of one universal narrative grammar⁶⁰.

4) Terry Eagleton has demonstrated that structural analysis undermines the details of narrative, especially characters. He invents a story about a boy who runs away from home and falls into a pit. The father comes after him, peers into the pit but cannot see him. At that moment, the sun rises to a point directly overhead and illuminates the pits depths with its rays, allowing the father to rescue his boy and effect a joyous reconciliation. Eagleton points out that a structural analysis of a story like this is bound to change it into a series of binary

oppositions (low versus high, for example). The problem with such a procedure is that one "could replace father and son, pit and sun, with entirely different elements - mother and daughter, bird and mole - and still have the SAME STORY. As long as the structure of RELATIONS between the units is preserved, it does not matter which items you select"⁶¹. Structural exegesis of biblical narrative needs to begin with a thorough appreciation of details and characters within the text, and not to obscure their importance by reducing them to abstract items on a quasi-mathematical grid. That is why, in Part Two of this thesis, we shall only include a structuralist interpretation of John 18-19 *after* we have exposed the same text to a rigorous narrative analysis in chapter five.

5) The structural analysis of narrative at best obscures and at worst obliterates the figure of the author. Roland Barthes' celebrated essay entitled, THE DEATH OF THE AUTHOR (1968) really typifies this anti-authorial stance within structuralism⁶². It needs to be recognized that the whole structural approach to narrative really depends on the notion that it is deep structures and not we ourselves that generate meaning. And yet, is this not after all a form of linguistic totalitarianism? Jean Marie-Domenach writes that this sort of philosophy ends up with the following scenario: "I don't think, I am thought; I don't speak, I am spoken; I don't deal with something, I am dealt with." This is unacceptable because "The system, a thinking that is cold, impersonal, erected at the expense of all subjectivity, individual or collective, negates at last the very possibility of a subject capable of expression and independent action"⁶³. However, one cannot avoid questions of theological motivation and authorial intentionality (the concerns of redaction criticism) in the narrative criticism of the NT. This does not

mean that we shall fall foul of the celebrated "intentional fallacy" ⁶⁴. The "intentional fallacy" rightly exposed the dangers of judging the merit of a literary work on the basis of its author's definable intention for it. It was never supposed to be an indictment against any discussion of authorial intention. If authorial intention were to be excluded from the programme of literary and biblical hermeneutics, then we should have to drop redaction criticism altogether.

6) In spite of its methodological weaknesses, structural exegesis is capable of providing insights about biblical narrative which no other method could supply. This is evident especially in essays like Roland Barthes' STRUGGLE WITH THE ANGEL which, more than any other critical analysis, helps to explain how and why we experience a kind of "surrealistic sense of disorientation" in reading the tale - a disorientation that is not unlike discovering that the detective is really the murderer⁶⁵. As Tony Thiselton has rightly put it, "it is possible to use structural methods without necessarily subscribing fully to structuralism as an ideology"⁶⁶. Of the Lévi-Straussian method, Thiselton has said that "without question the human mind does rely on the use of semantic opposition, and meaning can be fruitfully analyzed in terms of the structural relations between semantic components at various levels, from that of the word to that of the narrative, or even that of a whole biblical book"⁶⁷. Of the method deriving from Propp and Greimas, he writes: "Even if the 'narrative grammar' of Greimas sometimes seems forced in its application to biblical texts, this and other structural models help us to see the familiar texts in a fresh light and from a fresh vantage-point"⁶⁸. In the present work we shall be attempting to expose the Johannine passion account to structural

exegesis, but we shall be proceeding in a manner which takes the whole weight of this critique into account.

CHAPTER TWO

Section Three. JOHN AS NARRATIVE PERFORMANCE.

What might a structural approach to JOHN look like, and what might it contribute to our understanding of the gospel ? At the outset of this final section we need to make an important distinction between structural exegesis of JOHN, and critical studies on the proposed narrative *structure* of JOHN. Birger Olsson's *STRUCTURE AND MEANING IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL* (1974) is one example of a Johannine study which is concerned about structure and yet which is not structural exegesis. Olsson's method is text-linguistic; that is to say, it proceeds with the help of "linguistics dealing with semantic structures, analysis of discourse and textual problems"⁶⁹. Olsson is not concerned about sources or historicity, he is concerned with the message and the nature of the text in its final form: "from an analysis of the constitutive elements in the text I shall try to determine its message and then describe its linguistic and literary form (text type)"⁷⁰. Olsson chooses linguistic units which have definite beginnings and endings, the first John 2.1-11 (a narrative text), the second John 4.1-42 (a dialogue text). He then describes the linguistic principles by which the minute information units in each text are linked together to form a total literary structure. This involves analysis of phrases, clauses, terminal features, tenses, prepositions and so on. As Olsson rightly remarks, "my investigation is but little influenced by the French structuralist method", for the emphasis is not on abstract translinguistic structures but upon linguistic, semantic structures⁷¹.

Another sort of structure-analysis on JOHN which is *not* structural exegesis is exemplified in David Deeks' essay, *THE STRUCTURE OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL* (1968). Again, as in Olsson's title, the word

"structure" may lead the reader to expect an example of structural exegesis, but this is not the case. Deeks is interested in the surface structure of JOHN, that is, with the visible organization of material into definable narrative sections. For Deeks, JOHN is composed of four sections: (A)1.1-18, (B)1.19-4.54, (C)5.1-12.31 and (D)13.1-20.31, with John 21 regarded as a later appendix. The prologue of the gospel is seen as the crucial key to the gospel's structure. It too is composed of four subsections which provide a summary of the contents of the four main sections of the gospel. These four subsections Deeks labels COSMOLOGICAL (1.1-5), THE WITNESS OF JOHN (1.6-8), THE COMING OF THE LIGHT (1.9-13) and THE ECONOMY OF SALVATION (1.14-18). Deeks proposes that this pattern has been deliberately constructed and that this complex structure reveals St. John to have been a "skilful artist"⁷². The skill is further visible in the way in which the latter two sections (C and D) repeat in reverse order the themes of the first two sections (A and B), so that the gospel is seen as "a huge chiasmus: A,B;B' (=C),A' (=D)"⁷³. Clearly such an approach is not structural exegesis. As practised on JOHN by Deeks, Talbert, Webster and Staley⁷⁴, it is neither structural exegesis nor narrative criticism, but an exercise better described as "architectural analysis"⁷⁵.

One of the few genuine examples of structural exegesis in Johannine studies is J.D.Crossan's STRUCTURALIST ANALYSIS OF JOHN 6 (1979). In this study, Crossan assumed the literary unity of John 6 and openly excused himself from historical-critical issues. He began with a detailed analysis of each segment of the text, separating narrative from discourse (deeds from words) and Actants from Action (personae from effects). The first half of his analysis deals with narrative, since "the simplest reading of the text reveals how the predominance of

narrative in 6.1-21 gives way to the predominance of discourse in 6.22-71)⁷⁶. In the narrative material, the actants are Jesus, the disciples and the crowds (who become "the Jews" from 6.41 onwards). The two principal actions are MOVING and FEEDING. In the Discourse, the actants are God (mentioned by Jesus with various titles), the Son of Man, the One Sent, Moses, the Prophets and so on. The discourse actions are "transcendental Moving and transcendental Feeding"⁷⁷, for we have in direct speech a descending-reascending scheme, and an identification between the I of Jesus and The Bread, which did not appear in the narrative. Thus, Crossan's structural exegesis cleverly shows how things existing at different levels at the beginning of the text are mediated by the end of it. Though Jesus is different from the bread he offers at the start, he is metaphorically one with it at the end. There is a gradual focussing of crowds into Jews, disciples into the twelve, literal moving and feeding into transcendental moving and feeding. Things existing as binary opposites at the start of the narrative have been mediated by its conclusion.

If Crossan's analysis of John 6 owes much to Lévi-Strauss' structural approach to myth, P.J. Cahill's *NARRATIVE ART IN JOHN IV* (1982) owes much to Vladimir Propp's structural approach to Russian fairy-tales⁷⁸. For Cahill, John 4 is a "sustained artistic accomplishment", "a masterpiece of narrative design", in its own right⁷⁹. However, it is also "a story reflecting literary characteristics manifested in OT narratives of great antiquity"⁸⁰. In order to establish the OT generic structure of which John 4 forms a part, Cahill uses a method which combines recent OT analysis of type scenes with the structural approach deriving from Propp. In true structuralist style, Cahill begins with a description of the surface

features of the text, concentrating particularly on STRUCTURE, REPETITIVE DEVICES, MOTIFS and THEMES. Even though the story of the Samaritan woman appears to be about marriage, Cahill argues that "the theme of the narrative is true worship" and that "the controlling metaphor, skillfully contrived by the writer, is not that of marriage but of betrothal"¹. Many of the narrative characteristics of John 4 fit into the pattern of the OT betrothal scene, especially the mention of Jacob's well, which is a reminiscence of the well in the betrothal scene of Genesis 29.1-20. However, the marital symbolism and betrothal echoes are figurative devices. "False worship, of which the Samaritan woman is but a symbol, is infidelity or adultery"². John 4 is an ironic betrothal scene in which infidelity is false worship and marriage true worship.

In many ways it is surprising that a gospel which has so often been discussed as "myth" (Bultmann) and so often analyzed in terms of its dualistic framework should not have invited a forefront of structural analyses resembling Lévi-Strauss' approach. This situation may well be rectified in the 1990's, but at the time of writing this thesis, Crossan's essay is the only example of Lévi-Straussian exegesis of JOHN which the present writer could locate. In this thesis, we shall be looking at John 18-19 from a structuralist point of view, though we shall not be describing this historical narrative as a myth, nor shall we be guilty of attributing its origins solely to the workings of a human mind. Our approach will be to isolate the basic story pattern of John 18-19 and then to map it against the appropriate generic structure. We shall do this because it is our belief that all narratives, including John 18-19, must obey or transgress the basic laws which apply to the relevant genre in question. Just as we obey or disobey grammatical rules

when we speak or write (even though we are not aware of those rules), so the fourth evangelist must have composed his passion narrative with some generic structure or "paradigm" at the back of his mind.

This brings us back to the notion of "performance". The heading of this chapter, JOHN AS NARRATIVE PERFORMANCE, may have led the reader to expect a chapter on the dramatic and liturgical qualities of the fourth gospel, which have often been the subject of articles and lectures²³. However, by now it will be clear that our description of Johannine narrative as in some way "performative" does not refer to its theatrical potential but rather to something quite different. As we said at the end of section one of this chapter, to understand the concept of "performance" we need to recall Saussure's fundamental distinction between *langue* - the system of interpersonal rules and norms governing language - and *parole* - the actual, individual manifestations of this system in writing and in speech. In Chomsky's linguistic theory, this distinction between rule and behaviour is expressed by the terms COMPETENCE (synonymous with *langue*) and PERFORMANCE (synonymous with *parole*). When we speak of Johannine narratives as "performances", we are referring to them as the manifestations of a kind of narrative grammar. When in chapter six we look at John 18-19 as a performance, we are not interested so much in its dramatic qualities (though interestingly these will be mentioned) but in its relationship to the narrative competence which, like a "deep structure", lies behind it. Just as learning English involves mastering a linguistic system of norms and rules, so appreciating the narrative of John 18-19 will involve for us the mastering of that narrative system which enabled its composition and our understanding of it. This is the task we have set ourselves in chapter six of this work.

It is important to note that the method of structural exegesis we have chosen in chapter six resembles Propp more than it resembles Lévi-Strauss. Edgar McKnight has shown that the structural analysis of narrative which derives from Vladimir Propp is interested with plot whilst the structural analysis which derives from Lévi-Strauss is interested in "structures unrelated to plot"²⁴. We have seen this in section two of this chapter. George Nicklesburg's essay was interested in discovering the underlying narrative genre of MARK's passion account. From a syntagmatic labelling of each part of MARK's narrative he was able to see that Mark 15-16 is based on a particular generic model, "the stories of Persecution and Vindication in Jewish Literature". Plainly this is an approach to the deep structures of a gospel which assesses the nature of its plot, and then seeks to discover the underlying generic plot-grammar of which it is a performance text. This emphasis upon plot is noticeably absent from Elizabeth Malbon's structural analysis. She does not provide a syntagmatic appreciation of MARK's plot. In fact, Malbon shows no real interest in MARK's plot at all. Just as Lévi-Strauss is primarily interested in the mental structure which has produced mythic texts, so Malbon is primarily interested in examples - in MARK's narrative - of the mind's innate tendency to mediate opposites. So, whilst Nicklesburg explores deep structures related to MARK's plot, Malbon explores deep structures unrelated to MARK's plot.

Our structural approach to John 18-19 is one which explores structures related to plot. It is derived from Propp and follows Nicklesburg and Cahill rather than Malbon and Crossan. The reason for this choice of method is because I am extremely doubtful whether it is possible to provide a comprehensive structural analysis of JOHN in which the mediation of opposites is seen at work. JOHN's dualism is very stark

indeed. Light and darkness, understanding and misunderstanding, sight and blindness, shepherd and wolf, accuser and accused are all opposites which we see (along with many more) in the fourth gospel, and yet they remain in polar tension throughout *JOHN*. In the fourth gospel (and here *JOHN* departs from the world of myth) opposites are not mediated. Those in the dark tend to stay in the dark. There is hardly any significant development of character, let alone transformation. However, parts of the fourth gospel do very readily yield themselves to the kind of plot-related structural analysis deriving from Propp, as we have seen in the case of Cahill's essay. What I want to explore in chapter six is the narrative grammar which lies behind the evangelist's construction of his passion-plot. This grammar, like the model which Nicklesburg finds behind Mark 15-16 (and indeed Cahill behind John 4) is a grammar of plot possibilities which are relevant to the genre in question and which remain constant. We need to discover this "competence" if we are to appreciate John 18-19 as "performance".

Northrop Frye has shown how, when an author sets about composing a story, he cannot create a completely original story-form because he is subject to "some kind of controlling or coordinating power"⁵⁵ in his mind. This power asserts itself very early on in the process of composition and "gradually assimilates everything to itself, and finally reveals itself to be the containing form of the work"⁵⁶. Frye sees this power as originating in four "pre-generic elements of literature", or "generic plots", or "*mythoi*"⁵⁷: comedy (the mythos of spring), romance (the mythos of summer), tragedy (the mythos of autumn), and irony and satire (the mythos of winter)⁵⁸. The mythos which dictates the plot-structure of John 18-19 is, as we shall see in chapter six, the tragic mythos. As Frye has written, "*Pathos* or catastrophe, whether in triumph

or defeat, is the archetypal theme of tragedy"⁸⁸. As he continues, "Anyone accustomed to think archetypally of literature will recognize in tragedy a mimesis of sacrifice. Tragedy is a paradoxical combination of a fearful sense of rightness (the hero must fall) and a pitying sense of wrongness (it is too bad that he falls)"⁸⁹. It will be our argument in chapter six that John 18-19, with its awesome spectacle of *the killing of the king*, is a performance of the mythos (or paradigmatic story-plot) of tragedy. We shall not be claiming that the fourth evangelist has consciously constructed a tragic fiction. Rather, we shall be proposing that the tragic mythos, inherent within his culture, was in the back of his mind and dictated the narrative composition of his historical, passion material. It is hoped that this structuralist appreciation of the plot and genre of John 18-19 will help to explain something of the "classic", "disclosing" power of this text⁹⁰.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER TWO.

1. F. de Saussure: COURS DE LINGUISTIQUE GENERALE: ed. Charles Bally, Albert Sechehaye, Albert Riedlinger: 1915. This volume was published posthumously and represents a collection of de Saussure's lectures collected by his students.
2. T.Hawkes, STRUCTURALISM AND SEMIOTICS, p.18.
3. F.Jameson, THE PRISON-HOUSE OF LANGUAGE: A CRITICAL ACCOUNT OF STRUCTURALISM AND RUSSIAN FORMALISM, Princeton and London, Princeton University Press, 1972. p.109.
4. T.Hawkes, STRUCTURALISM AND SEMIOTICS, p.20.
5. Ibid, p.20.
6. Ibid, p.20.
7. V.Propp, STRUCTURE AND HISTORY IN THE STUDY OF THE FAIRY TALE, p.59.
8. Ibid, p.60.
9. Ibid, p.69.
10. C.Br mond, THE NARRATIVE MESSAGE, p.9.
11. Ibid, p.9.
12. V.Propp, STRUCTURE AND HISTORY IN THE STUDY OF THE FAIRY TALE, p.70.
13. Ibid, p.70.
14. C. L vi-Strauss, STRUCTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY, London, Allen Lane, 1969. See in particular pages 213f in which L vi-Strauss decodes the Oedipus myth so as to find the *Langue* behind this particular, mythic parole.
15. Ibid, p.211.
16. Ibid, p.230.
17. For this distinction, see Edgar V.McKnight's, MEANING IN TEXTS, pp.256-266.
18. A.J.Greimas' two seminal works are SEMANTIQUE STRUCTURALE (1966) and DU SENS (1970). For Greimas' adaptation of Propp's system see SEMANTIQUE STRUCTURALE, pp.175-180.
19. See R.Barthes' STRUGGLE WITH THE ANGEL, pp.137-141. When Barthes subjects Genesis 32.22-32 to a "structural analysis", he distinguishes between *actantial analysis* deriving from Greimas and *functional analysis* deriving from Propp.
20. R.Barthes, INTRODUCTION TO THE STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF NARRATIVES, p.79.
21. Ibid, p.79.

22. Ibid, p.79.
23. Ibid, p.84.
24. Ibid, p.98.
25. R.Barthes, STRUGGLE WITH THE ANGEL, p.128.
26. Ibid, p.138.
27. Ibid, p.138.
28. E.Leach, GENESIS AS MYTH, p.8.
29. Ibid, p.10.
30. Ibid, p.11.
31. Ibid, p.22.
32. N.Chomsky, ASPECTS OF THE THEORY OF SYNTAX, Cambridge, Mass.: the MIT Press, 1965. On p.4. Chomsky notes the similarities between de Saussure's *langue* and his own *competence* but also states that *competence* is "a system of generative processes" and not just a "systematic inventory of items".
33. W.Kelber, THE ORAL AND THE WRITTEN GOSPEL, p.54. When Kelber writes that "Mark's exorcisms register uniformity in compositional structure and variability in narrative performance" he sounds very much like a structuralist.
34. E.S. Malbon, NARRATIVE SPACE AND MYTHIC MEANING IN MARK, p.2.
35. Ibid, p.2.
36. Ibid, p.2.
37. Ibid, p.13.
38. Ibid, p.8.
39. Ibid, p.106f.
40. Ibid, p.131.
41. Ibid, p.131.
42. Ibid, p.131.
43. Ibid, p.133.
44. Ibid, p.133.
45. See Donald Juel's MESSIAH AND TEMPLE: THE TRIAL OF JESUS IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK (SBL. Scholars Press. Dissertation Series no 31. 1977) and Frank Matera's THE KINGSHIP OF JESUS: COMPOSITION AND THEOLOGY IN MARK 15 (SBL. Scholars Press. Dissertation Series no 66. 1982). Juel's approach to MARK's

trial narrative is one of "literary appreciation" (p.36). He defines MARK as "story" and then claims that "we may assume that the story has a structure and a plot; we can examine the structure, observe the development of the plot, noting obvious high points in the story. We can isolate themes that run through the narrative. We can study the literary style of the author" (p.43). Juel anticipates Rhoads and Michie here.

46. G.W.E.Nicklesburg, *GENRE AND FUNCTION*, p.155.

47. Ibid, p.155.

48. Ibid, p.156.

49. Ibid, p.156.

50. Ibid, p.162.

51. All the more remarkable when one reads footnote 18 on pp.156-7 of Nicklesburg's essay. Here Nicklesburg tells us how Norman Petersen pointed out the similarity between his approach and Vladimir Propp's after Nicklesburg had first advanced it in an earlier work. Nicklesburg claims that he had "no knowledge" of Propp's work at the time. However, he then goes on to write that "in the present discussion, I have refined my analysis, profiting considerably from Propp's methodological awareness".

52. Nicklesburg mentions Daniel and Aline Patte's *STRUCTURAL EXEGESIS* on p.154. He writes that they have "focussed on the Markan passion narrative from a holistic literary perspective...with the tools of structural analysis" but that they "have not discussed the genre of the whole passion narrative".

53. V.Propp, *STRUCTURE AND HISTORY IN THE STUDY OF THE FAIRY TALE*, p.66.

54. A.Johnson, *STRUCTURALISM AND BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS*, p.4.

55. See K.K.Ruthven's *MYTH* (London, Methuen, 1976) p.41.

56. R.Scholes and R.Kellog, *PLOT IN NARRATIVE*, p.278.

57. Northrop Frye, quoted in Alan Culpepper's *ANATOMY*, p.83. Culpepper wrongly regards JOHN as romance. I challenge him to find any example of a romance narrative in literature which even remotely resembles the fourth gospel. It is interesting that he provides no comparative literature to support this description of JOHN.

58. See, for example, pp.60-90, which average almost a diagram each page (*STRUCTURAL EXEGESIS*, by Daniel and Aline Patte).

59. C.Galland, p.194 of Alfred Johnson's *STRUCTURALISM AND BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS*.

60. See Edgar V.McKnight's *MEANING IN TEXTS*, p.260f for a similar judgement.

61. T.Eagleton, *LITERARY THEORY*, p.95.

62. R.Barthes, THE DEATH OF THE AUTHOR, p.142: "Writing is that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body writing".
63. Jean Marie Doménach, cited in Palmer's HERMENEUTICS (Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1969), p.216.
64. W.K.Wimsatt and Monroe C.Beardsley, THE INTENTIONAL FALLACY, in THE VERBAL ICON (New York, Noonday, 1958). As Meir Sternberg rightly points out in his POETICS OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVE, "the argument is more moderate than its reputation might suggest" (p.8).
65. J.Barton, READING THE OLD TESTAMENT, p.105.
66. A.C.Thiselton, STRUCTURALISM AND BIBLICAL STUDIES, p.334.
67. Ibid, p.334.
68. Ibid, p.334.
69. B.Olsson, STRUCTURE AND MEANING, p.2.
70. Ibid, p.3.
71. Ibid, p.9.
72. D.Deeks, THE STRUCTURE OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.121.
73. Ibid, p.122.
74. See Charles Talbert's ARTISTRY AND THEOLOGY (1970), Edwin Webster's PATTERN IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL (1982) and Jeff Staley's STRUCTURE OF JOHN'S PROLOGUE (1986).
75. C.Talbert, ARTISTRY AND THEOLOGY, p.341. Talbert wants to uncover "the architectural design by which the present form of the Fourth Gospel was constructed".
76. J.D.Crossan, A STRUCTURALIST ANALYSIS OF JOHN 6, p.239.
77. Ibid, p.244.
78. P.J.Cahill, NARRATIVE ART IN JOHN IV, p.41.
79. Ibid, p.41.
80. Ibid, p.41.
81. Ibid, p.44.
82. Ibid, p.46.
83. See pp.202, 211-212 of this thesis, and also bibliography.
84. E.V.McKnight, MEANING IN TEXTS, pp.256-266.

85. N.Frye, THE ANATOMY OF CRITICISM, p.245.
86. Ibid, p.246.
87. Ibid, p.162.
88. Ibid, p.163f
89. E.V.McKnight, MEANING IN TEXTS, p.261.
90. N.Frye, THE ANATOMY OF CRITICISM. p.214.
91. See the Introduction to this thesis for an explanation of these adjectives.

CHAPTER THREE. JOHN AS COMMUNITY NARRATIVE.
SECTION ONE. NARRATIVE AND SOCIAL IDENTITY.

Alan Culpepper's *ANATOMY OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL* begins with a critique of redaction criticism which one often finds in introductions to NT narrative criticism. He criticizes redaction-critical approaches to JOHN because they use the gospel as "a 'window' through which the critic can catch 'glimpses' of the history of the Johannine community"¹. They assert that "the meaning of the gospel derives from the way it was related to that history"². This critique was first put forward in Norman Petersen's analysis of the literary problems in the historical-critical paradigm. In *LITERARY CRITICISM FOR NEW TESTAMENT CRITICS* (1978), he too had criticized redaction critics for construing texts "as windows opening on the preliterate history of their parts rather than as *mirrors* on whose surfaces we find self-contained worlds"³. Both Culpepper and Petersen offer an alternative method in which the text is seen as a mirror, and in which "meaning" evolves out of the interaction between mirror and observer, text and reader⁴. In this paradigm, the narrative world of each gospel is seen neither as a window onto the history of a community, nor as a window onto the ministry of Jesus. Biblical narratives are no longer analyzed in historical and sociological perspective, as in form and redaction criticism, but rather in the kind of text-centred perspective which we are now in a position to associate with structuralism and the New criticism.

More recently, voices have been raised against this somewhat narcissistic approach to interpretation. Meir Sternberg begins his thorough investigation into the *POETICS OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVE* (1985) with the reminder that narrative critics must take note of social *FUNCTIONS* as well as literary *FORMS*. For Sternberg, biblical narratives

are "functional structures", they are "a means to a communicative end, a transaction between the narrator and the audience on whom he wishes to produce a certain effect by way of certain strategies"⁶. As Sternberg continues, "like all social discourse, biblical narrative is oriented to an addressee and regulated by a purpose or set of purposes involving the addressee"⁶. There is therefore a danger in reading "biblical texts out of communicative context"⁷, in separating forms from functions. To concentrate on forms, devices and configurations instead of communicative design is not enough, because "a sense of coherence entails a sense of purpose"⁸. By failing to consider the relationship between narrator and audience, many narrative critics have degenerated into precisely the kind of atomism they despised in their historical-critical forbears. The fact that recent narrative critics of the Bible have indulged in a purely synchronic, often subjective analysis of patterns or surface structures is a source of regret for Sternberg. Such people "advocate the methods and rehearse the manifestoes of the New Criticism, but without duly adjusting them to the theoretical revaluations made since or to the conditions of biblical study"⁹.

To Sternberg's cautionary reminder we should add William Riley's essay entitled, *SITUATING BIBLICAL NARRATIVE* (1985), in which the author examines the relationship between poetics (e.g. the strategies used for composing a narrative) and the transmission of community values. Riley begins with a criticism of the recent narrative approaches to Scripture because they eschew rigorous consideration of context. As Riley rightly says, "the concern of the scholar has always been to locate the scripture under consideration within its context, be it the context of the written text itself or the historical context from which it arises. If the narrative approach is to be critically grounded and avoid the

subjectivity to which it is sometimes prey, context may provide the key to the process"¹⁰. Riley's point is that one cannot avoid "the community dynamic of which the text is the tangible evidence"¹¹. One cannot avoid the fact that "traditional narrative communicates the values of the traditional community in which it functions"¹². The stories of the Bible are traditional in the sense that they survive. These stories perpetuate insights and values which are durable and special in the life of their authors' communities. When one reads a biblical narrative, one must therefore be alert to the value-system which is either explicit or implicit in the narrative, and to the sociological significance of these value-signs. For both Sternberg and Riley therefore, narrative criticism does not imply a purely text-immanent approach but rather a more eclectic procedure in which social function and context are important ingredients.

A way through the current anti-sociological bias of NT narrative criticism may lie in an understanding of the relationship that exists between narrative and social identity. At a personal level, narrative is the indispensable and inevitable medium for expressing my own sense of identity. As Stephen Crites has written, "a man's sense of identity seems largely determined by the kind of story which he understands himself to have been enacting through the events of his career, the story of his life"¹³. The actual process of constructing this sense of identity is exceedingly complex. It involves an identification of the "kernel events"¹⁴ within the mass of all our past experiences. This primary activity is the activity of REMEMBERING or RE-COLLECTING key images from the womb of memory. The second activity involves IMAGINATION, the synthetic faculty in the human mind. At this second stage, the imagination fuses the kernel events into a coherent "plot".

with the result that a sense of order, meaning and narrativity begins to emerge. The final activity, that of STORY-TELLING, involves incarnating this sense of purposeful personhood in an oral or a written medium. The medium nearly always chosen is narrative, because the narrative form is a cognitive instrument; it is "an irreducible form of understanding"¹⁵. In summary then, our sense of identity is the result of a complex and often lifelong process in which key memories are identified (REMEMBERING) and fused (IMAGINATION) into an identity-enhancing narrative (STORY-TELLING).

Personal identity is not discovered and constructed in solitary confinement. As Peter Berger has demonstrated, "identity is a key element of subjective reality and, like all subjective reality, stands in a dialectical relationship with society"¹⁶. As Berger continues, "identity is formed by social processes. Once crystallized, it is maintained, modified or even reshaped by social relations. The social processes involved in both the formation and the maintenance of identity are determined by the social structure. Conversely, the identities produced by the interplay of organism, individual consciousness and social structure react upon the given social structure, maintaining it, modifying it, or even reshaping it"¹⁷. In other words, a person's identity not only influences social structure, it is also influenced BY that structure. This implies that "communities, like persons, have identities"¹⁸, and that the two construct identity in an analogous way. This is indeed what Berger contends. The individual discovers a sense of identity when the experiences of life have congealed in recollection "as recognizable and memorable entities"¹⁹ (SEDIMENTATION²⁰) and when these kernel entities are expressed in (auto)biographical form. Community identity is established as a result of "intersubjective

sedimentation"²¹, a process in which common experiences are "incorporated into a common stock of knowledge"²² which is then *objectivated*²³ in a shared sign system. In Berger's system, REMEMBERING/IMAGINING/STORY-TELLING is replaced by SEDIMENTATION/OBJECTIVICATION.

For Berger, the decisive sign system is linguistic because "language objectivates the shared experiences and makes them available to all within the linguistic community, thus becoming both the basis and instrument of the collective stock of knowledge"²⁴. In a community's linguistic sign system, the "symbolic universe" of that community is established, described and maintained. "Symbolic universe" for Berger is "an overarching universe of meaning"²⁵ which is socially constructed. It is the "matrix of all socially objectivated and subjectively real meanings"²⁶, a matrix which helps the individual to recognize that "the entire society now makes sense"²⁷. Moving back to our narrative-centred argument, we can see that narrative is a crucial medium in this objectivication of shared knowledge and this maintenance of the symbolic universe. Berger does not mention narrative as such. The nearest he gets to it is in his discussion of mythology as one of the conceptual means by which the universe is maintained²⁸. However, narrative is important in Berger's discussion because it is narrative which collects events into a meaningful temporal unity including past, present and future. Communities live in what Brian Wicker has called a "story-shaped world"²⁹ and, as Stephen Crites has written, "such stories, and the symbolic worlds they project, are not like monuments that men behold but like dwelling-places. People live in them...they are moving forms, at once musical and narrative, which inform people's sense of the story of which their own lives are a part"³⁰.

In this thesis then, narrative criticism adapts and incorporates the sociological bias of form and redaction criticism in its appreciation of NT narrative. In the present study, we want to consider the way in which narrative poetics are made to serve the sociological function of transmitting community values. Put another way, we want to discover those communicative strategies by which the original addressee is encouraged to incorporate his/her own biography into the overarching narrative world of the gospel. In the paradigm offered here, gospel narratives are seen as the result of a complex procedure comprising remembering, imagining and story-telling. Through particular social pressures, the evangelist takes on the role of spokesman in the community. He gathers together kernel facts from the community's traditions about the historical Jesus, facts which will enable him to meet the needs of the community in which he writes. In this process of re-collection, the evangelist seeks to combine his stock of heterogeneous social knowledge into a meaningful and instructive totality. This yoking together of material is the "imaginative" part of his procedure. It is imaginative not "imaginary". That is, it involves the synthesis of disparate facts, as opposed to the creation of a pertinent fiction. Once a coherent plot has been established, then the process of story-telling can begin, and what the evangelist produces is an overarching narrative world or symbolic universe which makes sense of the real world in which his community lives.

A helpful example of community sensitivity within redaction criticism is Theodore Weeden's MARK: TRADITIONS IN CONFLICT (1971). Weeden's expressed aim was to interpret the gospel of Mark as the author intended and this involved attempting to discover the origin of the gospel and the situation in the life of the church which inspired its

creation³¹. Weeden frankly confessed the difficulties of trying to read MARK with the analytical eyes of a first century reader but he argued that the key to appropriating the proper stance lay in the characters and the characterisation of MARK³². On the basis that hellenistic historiography takes great liberties with historical personages in order to make salient points³³, Weeden proceeded to identify the key characters in the Markan drama. Prominent in MARK are the disciples and Weeden detects three stages in their relationship to Jesus. In 1.16-8.26 their relationship is characterised by "unperceptiveness" about the true nature of Jesus' identity and mission. In the second stage, from 8.27-14.9, they are characterised by "misconception". In the final stage, they are characterised by "rejection"³⁴. Weeden's conclusion is that "Mark is assiduously involved in a vendetta against the disciples"³⁵, that "he is intent on totally discrediting them. He paints them as obtuse, obdurate, recalcitrant men who at first are unperceptive of Jesus' messiahship, then oppose its style and character, and then finally totally reject it. As the coup de grace, Mark closes his Gospel without rehabilitating the disciples"³⁶.

The conflict between Jesus and the disciples is a Christological one. Whilst the disciples understand Jesus as a powerful *theios anēr* (divine man), Jesus expresses himself as a suffering 'son of man'. Weeden argues that the reason why this conflict is of consuming interest in MARK is because there was a similar debate taking place within his own community³⁷. From Mark 13, Weeden concludes that false prophets had infiltrated the church proclaiming a *theios-anēr* christology at a time when it was experiencing intense confusion over its own and Jesus' apparent powerlessness. As Weeden puts it, Mark "stages the christological debate of his community in a "historical" drama in which

Jesus serves as a surrogate for Mark and the disciples serve as surrogates for Mark's opponents. Jesus preaches and acts out the Markan suffering-servant theology. The disciples promulgate and act out THEIOS-ANĒR theology³⁸. In the crucifixion story, Mark blends a Palestinian tradition in which Jesus' death is seen as the death of a suffering righteous one with another tradition in which Jesus' death is seen as the triumph of a *theios anēr* over his enemies. "Mark takes this latter tradition, which belongs to his enemies, and by blending it with the primitive Palestinian tradition and his own redactional creations... completely changes the position on the crucifixion reflected in his enemies' tradition to the story of the death of a suffering, humiliated Son of man"³⁹. Throughout the gospel, Mark combats the triumphalism of his opponents with a Christology based on powerlessness and suffering.

Weeden's work has rightly been praised for its originality but a number of weaknesses also need to be pointed out. Adverse criticisms of TRADITIONS IN CONFLICT have usually centred on the history of religions question concerning the nature and extent of Weeden's supposed *theios anēr*, and the literary question concerning MARK's characterization of the disciples. Not all scholars have been convinced of the adequacy of the term *theios anēr* or that Mark delineates the disciples' responses to Jesus in anything like the systematic way which Weeden suggests⁴⁰. The two complaints we would make of Weeden do not centre either on history of religions or on literary questions. In our opinion, Weeden's argument is vulnerable at a historical-critical and at a sociological level. First of all, Weeden is skeptical about the historicity of Mark's portrayal of the disciples. On the basis that some hellenistic historians took liberties with their material, Weeden encourages himself to say that Mark's portrayal of the disciples is a fictional, polemical

device intended to debunk his opponents. However, we should want to underline Ralph Martin's point that Mark "may be using historical materials for his own purpose, and proclaiming a message of the true kerygma by so utilizing traditions of what he believed to be true in the earthly life of Jesus"⁴¹. In short, sociological pressures may have caused a recondite evocation of history, as opposed to a liberal invention of it. It is by no means impossible that Mark was sensitive both to the history of Jesus (Best, after all, praises him for his conservatism⁴²) AND the history of his community.

A second critique of Weeden's book is that, sociologically speaking, it does not go far enough. In a sense, Weeden is not to blame for this because he was writing before the emergence of exegetical methods deriving from the social sciences⁴³. The point needs to be made, however, that Weeden's book is not sufficiently scientific when it comes to its analysis of MARK as a functional structure incarnating community values. Weeden requires categories from the sociology of religion/knowledge in order to describe more precisely the social significance of the second gospel. MARK is, in a sense, a social construction of reality. Howard Kee makes a similar point in his 1977 study of MARK entitled THE COMMUNITY OF THE NEW AGE. Kee's aim was to add models from the realm of social history to the normal literary and conceptual models with which biblical scholars have worked, since "without due attention to the *social dynamics* that were operative in the community by and for whom MARK was produced, we cannot reach conclusions about the cultural setting and therefore about the author's intention"⁴⁴. As Kee went on, "*sociological models* must be examined in order to to try to reconstruct how such a community would have emerged"⁴⁵. "The horizon must include attention to the *life-world* or

"sacred canopy" in which the community that lies behind this work displays its own attempt to impose a meaningful order"⁴⁶.

Kee's study of MARK is praiseworthy because it combines literary analysis with sociological explanation. It represents the logical outcome of a development in which redaction criticism in general has become more sociologically scientific, especially in Markan research. In the present work, we shall be using some of these insights from redaction criticism in our narrative criticism of John 18-19. Our method owes much to Riley's emphasis on the relationship between gospel narrative and social values, and on Sternberg's reminder that biblical narratives are acts of communication and persuasion between an author and a community. It also owes much to Kee's analysis of MARK, which begins with a rigorous literary analysis of images in the second gospel, and then proceeds to a hypothetical investigation of their sociological significance in the life-world of the Markan community. In this thesis, we shall imitate these three scholars by examining Johannine images which have ecclesiological connotations and then deducing their probable social function. In this way we infer social values from the narrative of the fourth gospel, but not so as to imply that JOHN is a community fiction, or an allegory of events in the community's history. As we shall see in section three of this chapter, our sociological emphasis in the narrative-critical programme is both a critique and an adaptation of the redaction criticism which has recently identified community history in JOHN. It is to these examples of redaction criticism that we now turn, with the specific intention of showing the difference between inferring sociological values (narrative criticism) and deriving community history (redaction criticism) from the narrative of JOHN.

CHAPTER THREE

SECTION TWO. RECONSTRUCTIONS OF THE JOHANNINE COMMUNITY.

The community dimension of JOHN has been explored with insightful results by a number of redaction critics⁴⁷. The two seminal studies in this area are J.L. Martyn's HISTORY AND THEOLOGY IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL (1968), and Raymond Brown's elaboration of it entitled THE COMMUNITY OF THE BELOVED DISCIPLE (1979). In both cases, the writers express their intention to probe into the community for whom JOHN was written. Both believe that the fourth evangelist was writing in response to particular social crises. Martyn's claim is that the student of JOHN can detect "even in its exalted cadences the voice of a Christian theologian who writes *in response to contemporary events and issues*"⁴⁸. Brown's claim is that the fourth gospel can be read "autobiographically", "as the history of the Johannine community"⁴⁹. This being the case, both Martyn and Brown concur that "it becomes imperative to take up temporary residence in the Johannine community. We must see with the eyes and hear with the ears of that community. We must sense at last some of the crises that helped to shape the lives of its members. And we must listen carefully to the kind of conversations in which all of its members found themselves engaged. Only in the midst of this endeavour will we be able to hear the Fourth Evangelist speak *in his own terms*"⁵⁰. The question we need to ask in this present work is how legitimate this redaction-critical method has been in explaining the sociological significance of Johannine narrative.

Martyn's book is essentially an extensive redactional study of John 9, the story of the man born blind. Martyn regards this narrative as a subtle blend of tradition and unique interpretation, as a composite work of dramatic art composed by the evangelist⁵¹. Though the narrative

is based on a traditional healing miracle, Martyn's contention is that we can detect in the composition "specific reflections of some definite situation in the life of the church"⁵². The key to understanding the community dimension of John 9 is in verse 22, where the blind man's parents are said to refuse to testify before the Jews because they are afraid of being expelled from the synagogue (APOSUNAGOGOS). Martyn argues that this verse is anachronistic. In Jesus' lifetime there was no such threat of excommunication from the Jewish synagogues. The statement therefore reflects the milieu of the Johannine community late in the first century, when we know from other historical sources that Jewish Christians were excommunicated for believing that Jesus was the Messiah. Indeed, Martyn believes that the wording of John 9.22 bears some resemblance to the reformulated twelfth benediction issued from Jamnia sometime after 85.A.D: "For the apostates let there be no hope, and let the arrogant government be speedily uprooted in our days. Let the Nazarenes (Christians) and the Minim (heretics) be destroyed in a moment, and let them be blotted out of the Book of Life and not be inscribed together with the righteous. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who humblest the proud!"⁵³

Martyn's retranslation of John 9.22 reads as follows: "The parents feared the Jewish authorities, for the latter had already enacted a means whereby followers of Jesus could be detected among synagogue worshippers. From Jamnia had come the official wording of the Shemoneh Esre including the reworded Benediction Against the Heretics. Henceforth anyone arousing suspicion could be put to a public test"⁵⁴. In this light, John 9 becomes what Martyn describes as a two-level drama⁵⁵, for the narrative not only relates a traditional healing miracle, it also relates an incident or incidents within the history of the Johannine

community. As far as Martyn is concerned, Jesus in John 9 represents a Christian preacher in the Johannine community who, in the name of Jesus, heals a Jew in the local synagogue. This Christian preacher hears that the man has been expelled from the fellowship of the synagogue - "not an uncommon event in the experience of this preacher"⁵⁶. The preacher therefore takes the initiative to find the man again. "They stand face to face in the street. The preacher knows that the man is just at the point of readiness for a genuine Christian confession, and so puts to him the decision of faith. The beggar responds readily with words addressed to his true healer: 'Lord, I believe.'⁵⁷ As Martyn concludes, "the Fourth Gospel affords us a picture of a Jewish community at a point not far removed from the end of the first century"⁵⁸. The gospel is therefore not just a narrative about the historical Jesus, it is above all a tacit biography of the Johannine community.

Raymond Brown's COMMUNITY OF THE BELOVED DISCIPLE builds on Martyn's thesis but goes a great deal further⁵⁹. In Brown's method, the reconstruction of Johannine community history is extracted from each chapter in the gospel, in the belief that the chronology of JOHN's narrative mirrors the history of its community. It concentrates most confidently on those passages in the gospel where Johannine theological interests come most obviously to the fore. It only argues from silence when John's silence could scarcely be accidental (as in John's omission of Jesus' eucharistic words, which Brown claims he must have known)⁶⁰. The development of Johannine community history which Brown ends up with looks like this (as it relates to the fourth gospel): in the mid 50's to late 80's, some Jews including followers of John the Baptist become disciples of Jesus (John. 1-3). A second group of Jews with an anti-Temple bias become disciples and make converts in Samaria (John 4). The

acceptance of this second group causes the emergence of a high, pre-existence christology. This causes hostility with non-believing Jews (John 5-8) and finally excommunication sometime in the late 80's (John 9). After 90.AD, the acceptance of Greek believers into the community is seen to be God's plan of fulfilment (John 12). John 14-17 suggests that the community then develops a hostile attitude not only towards other Jews but to the world in general. Founded on the beloved disciple, it becomes a tightly knit family which regards itself as the true church over and against the apostolic churches founded on Peter and James. By the time the epistles are written, this family has begun to break up⁶¹.

How sound are these redaction-critical methods which we have associated with Martyn and Brown ? Though both Martyn and Brown have thrown light on the gospel of John, there is little doubt that Martyn has turned John 9, and Brown the whole of JOHN, into an allegory of Johannine community history. Both scholars work with the assumption that one can read late first century history from the surface of JOHN's narrative, even when that narrative portrays the ministry of the historical Jesus (about sixty years before). Consequently, when they arrive at the three "aposunagōgos" references in John 9.22, 12.42, and 16.2, they claim they refer to the Jamnia excommunication edict. When the narrator tells us that the blind man's family and the Jewish crypto-believers did not openly confess Jesus for fear of becoming "aposunagōgos", Martyn and Brown claim that excommunication would not have been a threat in Jesus' lifetime, and that the statements in 9.22 and 12.42 must therefore reflect the evangelist's situation. Furthermore, when Jesus promises his disciples that they will be "aposunagōgoi" because of their faith in him (16.2), Martyn and Brown

read this as *vaticinia ex eventu* - as prophecy read back into the lifetime of Jesus⁶².

Martyn and Brown work with a dangerous assumption in their redaction-critical reconstructions of community history. They believe that the language of exclusion from the synagogues is inappropriate for the 30's when Jesus was alive, and more appropriate in the context of the Jewish-Christian hostility at the end of the first century. At first sight this seems a reasonable argument. On further investigation, however, one is tempted to ask whether we are necessarily bound to read verses like John 9.22 as anachronistic just because some of its language has tenuous parallels with the language of the Twelfth Benediction (the *Birkat ha-minim*). This assumption is all too frequently made in gospel studies, with Kilpatrick exemplifying it in the context of MATTHEW⁶³ and Maddox in the context of LUKE-ACTS⁶⁴. But why cannot such language represent actual realities in the time of Jesus? Moody Smith writes that the Johannine Jesus is "the Jesus of the past, who lived and worked in first century Palestine among his fellow Jews", and that the community's struggle with the synagogue has not overlaid that foundation⁶⁵. Severino Pancaro has stated that "There is a line of fundamental continuity between the beliefs and attitudes of Jesus and those of the early church, between the reasons which led Jesus into conflict with the Jewish authorities of his day and those which led his followers into conflict with the synagogue"⁶⁶. What both these scholars are saying is that the language of tension with the Jewish synagogues in NT narrative reflects what actually happened in Jesus' lifetime. If that is true, then the tendency of interpreting JOHN's details solely as symptoms of community history becomes extremely questionable.

What we are exposing here is the fallacy of reading the language of JOHN as an allegorical signifier of community history. Always granted the obvious truth that the language of NT narrative reflects its milieu as well as Jesus-history, it is going too far to claim that one can reconstruct a community's history purely from the fourth gospel. This becomes especially questionable in the light of recent work done on the Twelfth Benediction by two scholars who have devoted themselves to a strenuous analysis of Jewish and early Christian self-definition. Lawrence Shiffman has contended that the birkat ha-minim was only meant to exclude Jewish Christians of a particular kind; that is, those who took an active leadership role in the synagogue services (as precentors, for example). It did not imply universal expulsion for all Christian believers from the Jewish people⁶⁷. Reuven Kimelman has added that the "birkat ha-minim does not reflect a watershed in the history of the relationship between Jews and Christians in the first centuries of our era" and that there was never a single edict which caused an irreparable separation⁶⁸. Given this uncertainty about the Twelfth Benediction itself, it seems all the more difficult to be sure about the redaction-critical accounts of Johannine community history which scholars have recently provided. "Aposunagōgos" in JOHN cannot be dogmatically interpreted as referring to excommunication from the synagogues sometime in the 90's.

It is important at this point to stress that we are not denying the existence of a Johannine community, nor are we dismissing the method of Johannine redaction criticism as John A.T. Robinson does. The evidence for the existence of a distinctively Johannine community behind the fourth gospel is, I think, strong. This evidence comes from two directions, one relating to tradition, the other to redaction. One of

the recent emphases in fourth gospel research has been the existence of an independent tradition behind JOHN which is both primitive and historically valuable⁶⁹. If such a tradition did exist independently from the synoptics, then we would have to presuppose a "traditioning community"⁷⁰, since oral and written material of this nature cannot survive and develop in a vacuum. Furthermore, the "we-passages" in JOHN suggest the existence of a community of people with a shared understanding about Jesus. When the narrator says in 21.24, "we know that what he said is true", this implies the existence of a body of people with a common Christological credo and a consensus about the reliability of their gospel's tradition. The evidence for a Johannine community is therefore fairly conclusive. Indeed, in spite of our emphasis in chapter one on the individuality of the creative mind behind the gospel of John⁷¹, the communication which takes place between the narrator and reader is much more of a We-Thou than an I-Thou phenomenon.

It is therefore not the evidence for a Johannine community which we are criticizing in Johannine redaction criticism. What we are seriously challenging is the presence in the gospel itself of evidence for specific historical incidents in the life of the Johannine community. JOHN is quite simply not like I Corinthians, or even I John for that matter. In other words, we do not find in JOHN the kind of overt response to concrete situations which would make the task of reconstruction more plausible. JOHN is a narrative, not a letter. One suspects, however, that Martyn and especially Brown are guilty of confusing the two literary forms. More serious still, one suspects that their method is basically circular;; they have a community history in mind before they begin their redactional exegesis, and so they inevitably return to their reconstructions as the mythical serpent

returns to its tail. However, we need to realize that this sort of practice has long since been dropped in literary studies elsewhere. For a long time it has been recognized that the business of "literary detection", as it was called, is based too much on subjective hypotheses and not enough on hard facts. Literary criticism in recent decades has come round much more to an analysis of what the text actually says, and has by and large forgotten the kind of literary detection practiced by scholars such as Leslie Hotson⁷². In this light, one can understand Culpepper's complaint that Johannine scholars have ignored JOHN's narrative as it is and have used it instead as a transparent window onto community history.

In the final analysis, our criticism of Martyn's and Brown's approaches has three facets: (a) Both Martyn and Brown tend to undermine the historical value of JOHN by treating its details as signs of community history; (b) they do not pay sufficient attention to the final form of JOHN's narratives⁷³; (c) they are insufficiently rigorous in their attempts at sociological explanation⁷⁴. The reader will recall that our critique of Weeden in the last section was that his TRADITIONS IN CONFLICT suffered from an unwarranted historical skepticism and a failure to go far enough in terms of sociological explanation. We are making the same criticism here of Martyn and Brown. What is needed now is a method which precludes allegorizing every detail of JOHN into a community biography, and yet which is sensitive towards the social function of Johannine language. This need will be met in the next section, where we shall construct a socio-narrative approach to JOHN which begins with detailed narrative exegesis and proceeds to sociological explanation.

CHAPTER THREE.

SECTION THREE. JOHN AS COMMUNITY NARRATIVE.

The only works of Johannine scholarship which partially fulfil the requirements described in the last section are Wayne Meeks' justly celebrated essay, *THE MAN FROM HEAVEN IN JOHANNINE SECTARIANISM* (1972) and Bruce Malina's *GOSPEL OF JOHN IN SOCIOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE* (1985). In his study, Meeks set out to explain that special pattern of Johannine language which describes Jesus "as the one who has descended from heaven and, at the end of his mission which constitutes a *krisis* for the whole world, reascends to the Father"⁷⁵. Meeks' belief is that this picture of the descending/ascending redeemer had been treated too one-sidedly as a problem in the history of ideas. That is to say, Johannine scholarship from Bultmann onwards had been too concerned with the possible mythical background for this picture in known gnostic sources. Meeks, on the other hand, is not concerned with the function of this "myth" in theological categories, but first and foremost with "the function of the mythical pattern within the Johannine literature"⁷⁶. As Meeks continues, "we have not yet learned to let the symbolic language of Johannine literature speak in its own way"⁷⁷. Secondly, he is interested in exploring "the question of what SOCIAL function the myths may have had"⁷⁸, using Edmund Leach's anthropological theory of myths as structured signals of communication, and the sociology of knowledge deriving from Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann. Meeks asks, "in what situation does a literary puzzle provide an appropriate means of communication ?"⁷⁹

Meeks' priorities reveal that his method starts with literary analysis before it proceeds to sociological explanation or community reconstruction. Meeks himself writes that his aim is "to discern the

function which the motif "ascent and descent" serves, first, within the literary structure of the Fourth Gospel, then, by analogy, within the structure of the Johannine community and its relationships to its environment"⁸⁰. The first half of Meeks' essay is consequently taken up with an analysis of those passages in which the motif is prominent. Meeks discovers that "the motif belongs exclusively to discourse, not to narrative"⁸¹; that is, it occurs in direct speech rather than in narration. He discovers that the first half of the gospel presents, through its dialogues, the descent of the Son of Man into this world as a *krisis* or Judgement on the world. In the second half of the book, from 13.1-5 onwards, this judgement is identified with his ascent, culminating with his summary debriefing in chapter 17 and with his being lifted up on the Cross in chapters 18-19. Meeks also discovers that "in every instance the motif points to contrast, foreignness, division, judgement"⁸². The motif has a dualistic tendency in that it stresses how Jesus is from above whilst his listeners are from below. This finding is brought out in the Nicodemus narrative in chapter 3 (on which Meeks focuses most of his analytical attention). Here, the fact that Nicodemus totally misunderstands Jesus' esoteric, heavenly secrets emphasizes the truth that he is from below whilst Jesus is from above.

From this groundwork, Meeks proceeds to the following question, "What functions did this particular system of metaphors have for the group that developed it ?"⁸³ Meeks argues that we already know certain things about the Johannine community from direct allusions in the Johannine literature. We know that the group had to distinguish itself against the sect of John the Baptist and even more passionately against a rather strong Jewish community. We know that this community suffered defections, conflicts of leadership and schisms⁸⁴. Meeks' contention is

that the descent-ascent schema in JOHN forms part of the symbolic universe of the Johannine community, and that its purpose was to make sense of certain aspects of the group's historical experience. "In telling the story of the Son of Man who came down from heaven and then re-ascended after choosing a few of his own out of the world, the book defines and vindicates the existence of the community that evidently sees itself as unique, alien from its world, under attack, misunderstood, but living in unity with Christ and through him with God"⁸⁵. The descent-ascent schema is a closed system of metaphors which can only be understood by those who have been born *from above* (3.3). As Meeks concludes, "One of the primary functions of the book, therefore, must have been to provide a reinforcement for the community's social identity, which appears to have been largely negative. It provided a symbolic universe which gave religious legitimacy, a theodicy, to the group's actual isolation from the larger society"⁸⁶.

There are admittedly some weaknesses in Meeks' essay. There is, for example, a somewhat casual use of words like "myth", "metaphor", "symbol", "motif" which implies they are all pretty well synonymous⁸⁷. Meeks also demonstrates that unwarranted historical skepticism about which we have already complained in other sociological approaches. He nowhere defines what he means by "myth", and he tends to pass throw-away judgements on the historicity of JOHN with unqualified descriptions of it as "fictional narrative"⁸⁸, or as "totally reconstructed by the evangelist"⁸⁹. Meeks is also guilty of being somewhat severe on Nicodemus in the fourth gospel. Other scholars have seen a more positive picture of him in John 3⁹⁰, and would certainly disagree with the view that Nicodemus' gift of 100lbs of embalming spices in John 19.38-42 is a sign of his "ludicrous" misunderstanding⁹¹. It is also, finally, a moot

point just how "closed" John's system of metaphors is since there are both Jews and Greeks who believe in Jesus in John's narrative world⁹². However, these are minor criticisms and they do not detract in any way from the freshness of Meeks' insights. Meeks has done Johannine scholarship a great service by introducing sociological categories which help to describe more scientifically the implications of Johannine language for Johannine community life. In this respect it is indeed a surprising fact that such sociological approaches approaches to JOHN have not been pursued between 1972 and the writing of this present work, with the sole exception of Bruce Malina.

Bruce Malina's essay on JOHN involves combining a narrative approach based on Hayden White's META-HISTORY with a sociolinguistic perspective deriving from Michael Halliday. Malina believes that the meanings encoded in the text of JOHN derive ultimately from the social system which has produced the gospel⁹³. As a result, his work seeks to "look into the social system revealed in and presupposed by Jn to generate insight into the distinctive features of this text"⁹⁴. Malina argues convincingly that "language is essentially a form of social interaction"⁹⁵ and it is this truth which leads him to ask, "Given the information communicated in Jn, can one infer the type of situation in which that sort of information could have been imparted ?"⁹⁶ Malina begins to answer this question by analyzing what kind of story JOHN depicts. He bases his classification on Hayden White, who believes that all historians are faced with the task of creating a coherent and justifiable story out of their sources. When constructing a plot for such stories, White proposes (following Northrop Frye) that the historian is faced with four modes of emplotment: comedy, tragedy, satire and romance. According to Malina, the fourth evangelist chose to

construct a "romantic tragedy" out of his historical material⁹⁷. In other words, he chose to compose a plot which is influenced by stories in which "the hero (individualistic) struggles unsuccessfully against opposing psychological, physical or social constraints, yet the struggle reveals how success can be found beyond the constraints or by acquiescing to them"⁹⁸.

Malina is concerned not only to identify what *kind* of story the fourth evangelist tells, he is also concerned to discover what kind of social interaction between author and audience is taking place in the language of this story. Malina's point is that the evangelist writes as he does "because of constraints on perception deriving from his social location"⁹⁹. He believes that the language of JOHN (with its self-conscious distancing of itself from the Jews and from the world) implies a social group which has recently broken away from existing Jewish institutions and which now finds itself "beyond ordinary limits"¹⁰⁰. Using Mary Douglas' grid and group model, Malina argues that JOHN's language reflects a "weak group/low grid quadrant"¹⁰¹, that is to say, it stands against the social group from which it has emerged, it stresses the importance of the individual, and upholds love as a key social value. He then claims, using Michael Halliday's sociolinguistic categories, that the language of JOHN is really an "antilanguage"; it is the language of an "anti-social group", "a counter-society with a counter-language typical of competing groups"¹⁰². Malina defines an anti-social group as "a social collectivity that is set up within a larger society as a conscious alternative to it"¹⁰³. Malina believes that the "antilanguage" of JOHN reflects a social group which upholds "an alternative social reality that runs counter to the social reality of society at large"¹⁰⁴. He believes that JOHN's antilanguage is

designed to "maintain inner solidarity under pressure" and to assist in "the resocialization of newcomers into that reality"¹⁰⁵.

Malina's essay is a good deal more complex than Wayne Meeks' and is certainly much more rigorous in its sociological investigation. However, even though Malina's insights are valuable, it is very questionable whether he has said anything new about JOHN at all. The method of sociological investigation deriving from Mary Douglas and Michael Halliday may appear appropriate and scientific, but its actual application to JOHN does not reveal anything which one could not find much more clearly expressed in Raymond Brown's COMMUNITY OF THE BELOVED DISCIPLE. Does all this talk of weak groups and low grids really help the Johannine scholar in identifying the social value-system encoded in JOHN ? Furthermore, is it absolutely certain that JOHN's language reflects a society as it actually exists or the kind of society which the evangelist would like his community to become ? Malina takes it for granted that JOHN reflects the community *as it actually existed at the time of writing*, which seems to me to make his whole thesis vulnerable to the charge of "social determinism"¹⁰⁶. Finally, there are real problems with Hayden White's META-HISTORY - upon which Malina is so reliant. We shall deal in detail with White's problematic understanding of history and narrative in the next section. At this point it is enough just to point out that White's interpretation of the historical understanding has received weighty criticisms from the pen of Paul Ricoeur and that Malina's has not taken this critique into account.¹⁰⁷

My own socio-narrative approach does not really resemble either Meeks or Malina, though I do, like Meeks, employ categories of explanation from the sociology of knowledge in our attempt to appreciate the social function of Johannine language. The real differences from

both Meeks and Malina lie in our initial, literary approach. Our initial procedure involves the analysis of associational clusters of narrative imagery which have an obvious sociological and ecclesiological importance. In this analysis of narrative imagery, our approach derives from Kenneth Burke's model of interpretation in the realm of social anthropology¹⁰⁸. For Burke, the literary work is supremely an act of communication, a choice of verbal gesture for the inducement of corresponding attitudes on the part of the one addressed, a strategy for selecting enemies and allies¹⁰⁹. The technique of symbolic analysis best suited for understanding the writer's lifeworld (as expressed indirectly in the text) consists of codifying associational clusters in the overall work. The basic unit for such analysis is the image, not the word, sentence, paragraph, or other lexical units. Burke contends that every literary work contains a set of implicit equations which are manifest in these images. The interrelationships among these clusters of imagery will lead to an understanding of the writer's motives and the writer's social world. The key images are defined by their frequency and intensity, and the three most common types are biological (to do with the body), personal (to do with the family) and abstract (to do with group identification).¹¹⁰

The analysis of narrative images which are familistic in character provides an obvious entrée into the Johannine community because "there is a strong sense of family within this communion, and the address as "brother"...is common because the members are all children of God"¹¹¹. It is through a narrative analysis of clusters of such socially significant images that we can fulfil the aim expressed in section one of this chapter. The aim we expressed there was to consider the way in which JOHN's narrative transmits community values and

enhances social identity. Put another way, our aim is to discover those communicative devices by which JOHN's first readers were enabled to incorporate their own biographies into the overarching story-world of the gospel. In our sociological analysis of Johannine narrative we shall mainly be employing concepts from the sociology of knowledge and the sociology of religion which, as Derek Tidball has pointed out, provide a fruitful though underused resource for NT studies'¹². In using these categories, however, we shall try to resist the pitfall of what Sheldon Isenberg calls "social determinism" - the pitfall of seeing a text as necessarily determined by social beliefs. As Isenberg points out, there may be times when a social narrative determines a community's ideological stance, instead of the opposite scenario in which the community's ideology determines the nature of the social narrative'¹³. With this caveat in mind, we shall proceed in chapter seven (a) to identify ecclesiological significant images in John 18-19, (b) to understand the system of which they form a part, and (c) to deduce their probable social function. Our socio-narrative approach will reveal that the story of the Cross was understood by the Johannine community as the place where the dying Jesus ministered a sense of social belonging and homecoming to Johannine Christians. Put another way, our approach will show how the death of Christ marked the birth of the community.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER THREE.

1. Alan Culpepper, ANATOMY, p.3.
2. Ibid, p.3.
3. Norman Petersen, LITERARY CRITICISM, p.24.
4. Ibid, p.24. Alan Culpepper, ANATOMY, p.4.
5. Meir Sternberg, POETICS OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVE, p.1.
6. Ibid, p.1.
7. Ibid, p.2.
8. Ibid, p.2.
9. Ibid, p.7.
10. W.Riley, SITUATING BIBLICAL NARRATIVE, p.38.
11. Ibid, p.38.
12. Ibid, p.38.
13. Stephen Crites, THE NARRATIVE QUALITY OF EXPERIENCE, p.302f.
14. Seymour Chatman, STORY AND DISCOURSE, p.53. See p.38 of this thesis.
15. Louis Mink, NARRATIVE FORM AS A COGNITIVE INSTRUMENT, p.132.
16. Peter Berger, THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY, p.194.
17. Ibid, p.194.
18. George Stroup, THE PROMISE OF NARRATIVE THEOLOGY, p.132.
19. Peter Berger, THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY, p.85.
20. Ibid, p.85.
21. Ibid, p.85.
22. Ibid, p.85.
23. Ibid, p.85.
24. Ibid, p.85.
25. Ibid, p.115.
26. Ibid, p.114.

27. Ibid, p.121.
28. Ibid, p.129.
29. Brian Wicker, THE STORY-SHAPED WORLD: FICTION AND METAPHYSICS, SOME VARIATIONS ON A THEME. Notre Dame, Indiana. London, University of London, Athlone Press. 1975.
30. Stephen Crites, THE NARRATIVE QUALITY OF EXPERIENCE, p.295.
31. Theodore Weeden, TRADITIONS IN CONFLICT, p.11.
32. Ibid, p.17.
33. Ibid, p.16.
34. Ibid, p.163.
35. Ibid, p.50.
36. Ibid, pp.50-1.
37. Ibid, p.81.
38. Ibid, p.163.
39. Ibid, pp.165-66.
40. Ralph Martin, MARK: EVANGELIST AND THEOLOGIAN. Exeter, Paternoster, 1986. p.152.
41. Ibid, p.153.
42. See pp.126f. of this thesis.
43. Although Martin Hengel uses Max Weber's sociological description of "the prophet" in his NACHFOLGE UND CHARISMA: Berlin, de Gruyter, 1968.
44. Howard Kee, COMMUNITY OF THE NEW AGE, p.3.
45. Ibid, p.3.
46. Ibid, p.3.
47. For a brief guide to some of the more recent reconstructions, see Robert Kysar's THE GOSPEL OF JOHN IN CURRENT RESEARCH, pp.316-18.
48. J.L.Martyn, HISTORY AND THEOLOGY, p.18.
49. R.E.Brown, COMMUNITY OF THE BELOVED DISCIPLE, pp.22-23.
50. J.L.Martyn, HISTORY AND THEOLOGY, p.18.
51. Ibid, p.27.

52. Ibid, p.27.
53. Ibid, p.58.
54. Ibid, pp.60-1.
55. Ibid, p.62.
56. Ibid, p.35.
57. Ibid, p.35.
58. Ibid, p.61.
59. R.E.Brown, COMMUNITY OF THE BELOVED DISCIPLE, pp.171-182. "It should be obvious to the reader of this book that I agree on many points with Martyn, whose work I greatly respect" (174).
60. Ibid, pp.20-1.
61. Ibid, pp.166-7 for a summary chart of Brown's reconstruction of Johannine community history.
62. Ibid, p.22.
63. G.D.Kilpatrick, THE ORIGIN OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST.MATTHEW (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1946) pp.110f.
64. Robert Maddox, THE PURPOSE OF LUKE-ACTS, Edinburgh, T & T Clark, 1985, p.180.
65. J.Moody Smith, JOHANNINE CHRISTIANITY, p.184.
66. Severino Pancaro, THE LAW IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.492.
67. Lawrence Shiffman, AT THE CROSS-ROADS, p.152.
68. Reuven Kimelman, BIRKAT HA-MINIM, p.244.
69. See p.143 of this thesis.
70. J.Moody-Smith, JOHANNINE CHRISTIANITY, p.11.
71. See p.30 of this thesis.
72. Leslie Hotson, THE FIRST NIGHT OF TWELFTH NIGHT, London. Rupert Hart-Davis, 1954. This book is an attempt to imagine what it was like being the original, first audience of this play using the method of literary detection. It would make an instructive comparison with R.E.Brown's COMMUNITY OF THE BELOVED DISCIPLE.
73. If Martyn had exposed John 9 to a rigorous narrative analysis he would have seen that the protagonist of this story is the blind man, not Jesus. If there is any community identification with a character in the story it

is with him, not with Jesus (the symbol of some Christian healer). The man born blind is, after all, subjected to a judicial interrogation and then, presumably, rendered "aposunagōgos" - the very thing which Martyn and Brown propose happened to the Johannine community!

74. See Brown's discussion of "sectarianism" on pp.14f which makes no reference at all to sociological studies of sects.

75. Wayne Meeks, THE MAN FROM HEAVEN, p.141.

76. Ibid, p.143.

77. Ibid, p.143.

78. Ibid, p.145.

79. Ibid, p.143.

80. Ibid, p.145.

81. Ibid, p.146.

82. Ibid, p.160.

83. Ibid, p.161.

84. Ibid, p.145.

85. Ibid, p.163.

86. Ibid, p.163.

87. Meeks describes the picture of the descending-ascending redeemer in JOHN as "symbolic language" (p.143), mythical language (p.143f), a motif (p.146) and a system of metaphors (p.161). There is no rigorous distinction between these designations.

88. Ibid, p.157.

89. Ibid, p.159.

90. F.P.Cotterell, THE NICODEMUS CONVERSATION: A FRESH APPRAISAL, p.241.

91. R.E.Brown, JOHN. VOL.II. p.960.

92. See John 12.20 and 12.42.

93. Bruce Malina, THE GOSPEL OF JOHN IN SOCIOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE, p.1

94. Ibid, p.1.

95. Ibid, p.1.

96. Ibid, p.1.

97. Ibid, p.3.
98. Ibid, p.4.
99. Ibid, p.11.
100. Ibid, p.11.
101. Ibid, p.8.
102. Ibid, p.11.
103. Ibid, p.11.
104. Ibid, pp.13-14.
105. Ibid, p.14.
106. See p.104 of this thesis, footnote 113.
107. Paul Ricoeur, TIME AND NARRATIVE VOL II, pp.161-168 and pp.72-87.
108. Kenneth Burke, THE PHILOSOPHY OF LITERARY FORM. See his essay in this volume entitled LITERATURE AS EQUIPMENT FOR LIVING. p.253f.
109. Ibid, p.253.
110. Ibid, p.254f.
111. R.E. Brown, COMMUNITY OF THE BELOVED DISCIPLE, p.60.
112. Derek Tidball, SOCIOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, pp.137-142.
113. Sheldon Isenberg, SOME USES AND LIMITATIONS OF SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC METHODOLOGY IN THE STUDY OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY, p.42.

CHAPTER FOUR. JOHN AS NARRATIVE HISTORY.
SECTION ONE. FICTION AND HISTORY.

Much of what we have written in the three previous chapters influences the question concerning JOHN's value as a source of knowledge about the historical Jesus. The very mention of the word "story" will lead some to ask whether narrative criticism does not commit us to regarding the gospels as first century fictions. But does this emphasis on the gospels as story imply that they are imaginary creations? This is a key question and those who stress the story-telling art of the four evangelists should not avoid answering it. Some people might work with the assumption that the proposition, "the evangelists were accomplished story-tellers" is synonymous with, "the evangelists were good at inventing the words and works of Jesus". Part of the reason for this centres on the idiom "telling stories". At one level, it quite neutrally denotes the practice of casting material in a narrative form. At another level it connotes something more negative; "telling stories" - along with its synonym, "telling tales" - suggests dishonesty, fabrication and even lying. For some people, the recent stress on the gospels as *fiction* has precisely this unfortunate nuance. Fiction, in colloquial speech, implies something invented, something made up, something *untrue*. Like the word *myth*, there is a gap between the connotation which the word has colloquially, and the technical denotation which it has for biblical scholars (which is often much more positive). Narrative critics who speak of the fictional and mythical nature of gospel stories may not *intend* anything destructive, but the rather more pejorative use of these words in wider contexts makes it sound as though the evangelists were dishonest reporters.

The word "fiction" has been commonly used by narrative critics of the Bible ever since Frank Kermode's study of MARK entitled THE GENESIS OF SECRECY: On the Interpretation of Narrative (1979). The publication of Kermode's book was a significant moment in the emergence of NT narrative criticism, and its contribution to our understanding of hermeneutics was particularly valuable. In spite of its insights, however, the book suffered from the hermeneutical problem of treating the gospels as fictional novels. Kermode's fondness for latent, secret senses in modern novels, added to his obvious respect for Austin Farrer's symbolic readings of MARK¹, led him to regard MARK as a highly symbolic novel. He claimed that the incongruous figure of the naked young man in Mark 14.51-52 performs the same kind of narrative function which the equally enigmatic "man in the macintosh" performs in Joyce's ULYSSES, even though Kermode himself admits that Joyce had created a narrative world designed to keep scholars busy for centuries². But such a comparison is obviously problematic because it is by no means certain that Mark wanted to tease his interpreters by introducing incidents which defy intelligibility. It is also problematic because such a view of the author of MARK inevitably leads us to undermine the gospels as windows onto historical realities. A view of MARK as a fictional novel will quite obviously result in a devaluation of its historical references because what had hitherto been understood as an accurate reminiscence can now be explained as a symbol and nothing more.

Kermode's tendency of undermining the historicity of MARK's narrative details by claiming purely symbolic significance for them is nowhere better illustrated than in his handling of Mark 14.51-2. Kermode first of all reiterates four traditional interpretations of the flight of the naked young man: first, it refers to Mark's own presence at the

arrest of Jesus, and is a kind of reticent signature; secondly, it is an incident created to lend an air of verisimilitude to the narrative, a history-like fortuity, a registration of reality; thirdly, it is a piece of narrative developed out of certain OT texts; fourthly, it is a pseudo-problem which is really insoluble³. Kermode finds none of these ultimately satisfying. His own interpretation is as follows: the naked young man is a representative of all the disciples, and his falling away is a kind of microcosm of their corporate flight⁴. The incident is not an historical reminiscence which is recorded merely because it happened. It is a fictional creation of an imaginative author who recognized the need, at this point in his story, to create the highly charged atmosphere of panic and desertion. In other words, the young man's flight captures the necessary narrative theme of desertion, just as the character of Judas captures the necessary theme of betrayal. Characters like Judas and the young man are therefore not "real" in the sense that they existed; they are imaginary agents which the evangelist invented because the narrative logic at this point required a deserter and a betrayer⁵.

In this light, it is easy to see how Kermode could propose that MARK is not a reliable record of facts but an interpretative fiction⁶. Right the way through THE GENESIS OF SECRECY, Kermode follows Hans Frei's ECLIPSE OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVE, which claims that the gospels are historylike, but not *history*⁷. Like "realistic" novels, they seem to possess the actual density and inner consistency of the real world, but they cannot be said to be transparent windows either onto Jesus-history or onto community history. However, this view is questionable; biblical narratives show a considerable respect for the historical because it is in the concrete world of space and time that the God of the Jews and the

Christians has acted. We shall develop this thought later, but it is interesting at this point to note that Kermode predicted a hostile reaction to his argument when he foresaw that "much of what I have said will be disallowed by defenders of a hermeneutics more conservative than mine"⁸. This is certainly true of this thesis because it is our contention that Kermode's understanding of history, which is decidedly radical and existentialist⁹, is singularly out of place in the context of biblical narrative. In Kermode's thesis, the gospels cannot be historiography (history-writing), because that would imply that they are in some way a window onto concrete historical realities. Instead the gospels must be seen as fictions; as narratives designed to create the *illusion* of historicity through realism (or what Kermode calls "reality-effects")¹⁰.

Kermode's thesis is best questioned by clarifying the differences as well as the similarities between historiography and fiction. A number of writers interested both in narrative hermeneutics and biblical criticism have recently contributed to this discussion in a helpful way. Meir Sternberg has shown that the emergence of analytical methods designed to highlight the Bible's story-telling has led most of the analysts to conclude partial or complete fictionality - fictionality understood in traditional scholarship as a denotation of "nonhistoricity, of the inventive as well as of the falsifying kind"¹¹. Sternberg goes on to show that many of these writers have fallen into the trap of believing that historiography is utterly opposed to fiction, and vice versa. That is to say, they have worked with the assumption that "history-writing is wedded to and fiction-writing opposed to factual truth"¹². Sternberg calls this "a category-mistake of the first order"¹³ since works of fiction often describe real places and events,

and works of history-writing often make mistakes. Too rigid a polarisation between historiography and fiction logically involves relegating Gibbons' *DECLINE AND FALL* to fiction because it contains errors, and Crane's *RED BADGE OF COURAGE* to historiography because "its plot bears a close resemblance to the events of the battle of Chancellorsville"¹⁴.

The real difference between historiography and fiction is not so much a difference between the factual and the imagined, or the true and the false, but a difference in truth CLAIM. As Sternberg explains, "history-writing is not a record of fact - of what really "happened" - but a discourse that CLAIMS to be a record of fact"¹⁵. Similarly, "fiction-writing is not "a tissue of free inventions" but "a discourse that *claims* freedom of invention" (*italics mine*)"¹⁶. What is crucial here is the difference between truth *value* and truth *claim*. If our definition of historiography depends solely upon truth *value*, then supposed works of history would lose their status as history when any mistakes were discovered. If our definition of fiction depends solely upon truth *value*, then supposed works of fiction would gain the status of historiography if sufficient details of fact were discovered in it. In practice, however, this never happens. Bad historiography is not described as fiction, and fictions which resemble history are not described as historiography. So the concept of truth claim is every bit as important in assessing historicity as the concept of truth value. The difference between historiography and fiction is primarily to be seen as a difference in authorial stance, as Walhout points out: "What interests us in a historical text is that the historian *claims* - asserts - that the projected world (the story) of the text together with the authorial point of view counts as a story and an interpretation of events as they

actually occurred. Such is obviously not the claim of the writer of fiction"¹⁷, for the writer of fiction claims that he has the license to create a world that is independent of factuality.

Paul Ricoeur has supported this argument by stating that the family resemblance between fiction and narrative historiography consists in the fact that both establish *plots*, but it is "a break between truth claims" that "separates empirical narratives and fictional narratives"¹⁸. A good example of the importance of truth claim in the assessment of truth value can be seen in Bernard Cornwell's nine novels describing the exploits of a fictitious British officer during the last six years of the Napoleonic War. Cornwell has what he calls an "historical note" appended to each of these books in which he distinguishes between history (i.e. what his source historiographies tell him) and what he has freely invented. At the end of *SHARPE'S ENEMY*, he writes: "Beyond the army of deserters and the rocket system, all else in *SHARPE'S ENEMY* is fiction. There is no Gateway of God, nor was any battle fought over the Christmas of 1812. The 60th existed, but all other Regiments are fictitious. I wanted to write one story that reflected the last winter when the British would be pinned back again in Portugal"¹⁹. The important words in this quotation are the words *fiction* and *reflect*. Cornwell's claim is not that he has written a faithful record of events, but a fictitious reflection of the kinds of things that *might* have happened. Thus, even in a grey area between fiction and historiography such as a quasi-historical novel, it is not only the number of facts but also the author's truth-claim that helps us to categorize the narrative in question. It is the author's stance in relation to his material as well as the definable amount of truthful information which decides the issue of truth value.

In the context of MARK, our decision concerning its status as historiography or fiction depends not only on the amount of facts and errors we can find in it but also on its author's attitude towards traditional material. The question we need to ask is this: Does Mark's narrative assert a faithfulness to historical tradition or does it assert a freedom over it? If Mark's authorial stance is one best described as "fidelity to tradition", then we can describe his work as historiography, provided it can also be shown that the Markan sources themselves are reliable. If it is one best described as "freedom to invent", then we can - like Kermode - describe it as fiction, even if (like Cornwell's novels) there is some reference to actual events and people in history. One Markan scholar who has much to contribute to this question is Ernest Best, whose MARK: THE GOSPEL AS STORY (1983) is one of the few works to combine both a sensitivity to MARK's narrative dynamics and its historical value. In this book, Best attempted to show how Mark composed an innovative and coherent narrative out of the material available to him in the tradition. In an earlier essay entitled, MARK'S PRESERVATION OF THE TRADITION, Best asked what "happened internally to the various pericopae as he incorporated them into the larger whole he was creating"²⁰. Did Mark use his tradition in a way that conserved it unchanged? Best finds five characteristics of MARK which suggest fidelity to tradition rather than freedom over it: an inconsistent use of titles of Jesus, inconsistent or superfluous information, unmodified tradition, unnecessary or irrelevant logia, and an unnecessary retention of names²¹. All these lead Best to conclude that, in the way in which Mark has preserved the tradition which existed before him, "he has been conservative"²², for a writer of fiction would have been eager to produce a much tidier narrative.

Best's appreciation of Mark's conservative disposition is principally responsible for his judgement that MARK is "narrative though the narrative is not put forward as fiction"²³. Whether or not we agree with Best's picture of Mark's restraint over traditional material, his thesis provides an excellent counter-argument to Kermode's. Kermode would no doubt explain the incongruities and inconsistencies which Best identifies in MARK not as evidence of authorial conservatism but of authorial creativity. For Kermode, such aporias would be explained away as reality-effects, as evidence that the author was constructing a narrative world which possesses the same kinds of incongruities and inconsistencies which we find in the "real" world. In other words, he would explain them away as aesthetic deceptions. The problem with this view is that it derives from an analysis of sophisticated strategies in much more recent narratives. The device of using an historian's stance in narrating events which are clearly not actual events, along with the device of imposing incongruities and inconsistencies on a narrative world in order to imitate the author's understanding of the "real" world, is a characteristic of modern fiction and not of ancient narrative. The gospels are not narratives containing signs which defy intelligibility, and whose "realism" consists of their proximity to a world whose norm is arbitrariness.

Kermode's description of MARK as fiction is really a generic convenience which opens the door to the kinds of sophisticated readings practised on more recent narrative forms. In reality, MARK cannot be described as fiction because the author's stance, along with the kinds of characteristics Best identifies, indicate a fidelity to historical tradition, not a limitless freedom over it. MARK's truth value as history derives from its truth-claim as well as its sources, and its

truth-claim in turn derives from the author's implicit faithfulness to the historical material available to him. In his construction of a narrative Christology, the second evangelist certainly interpreted his traditions concerning the words and works of Jesus, but not in such a way that history has been obliterated in the process. Those qualities of realism which Eric Auerbach saw so vividly in MARK are thus not fictional deceptions - as Kermode would have us believe - but faithful reconstructions of historical incidents. Thus, MARK's narrative of the denial of Peter, which is a story "of such immediacy that its like does not exist in the literature of antiquity" (Auerbach)²⁴, derives from the fact that it actually occurred (Best) and *not* from the fact that its author was good at achieving a realism which the reader would confuse with history (Kermode). Kermode's description of MARK as fiction and even as midrash²⁵ (a notoriously unstable usage) will therefore not do. The gospel's implicit truth-claim militates against such a value judgement.

In the final analysis, all the gospels share a family resemblance with OT narratives rather than with modern fiction, and a particular characteristic of OT narrative is its respect for history. Robert Alter writes: "The God of Israel, as so often has been observed, is above all the God of history: the working out of His purposes in history is a process that compels the attention of the Hebrew imagination, which is thus led to the most vital interest in the concrete and differential character of historical events"²⁶. In other words, history is sacred because it is the locus of God's self-revelation, and because it is sacred it is remembered and recounted faithfully as well as imaginatively. As Gary Herion has written, Hebrew history is *interpreted not fabricated*²⁷. As Herion has shown, mere

fictions about Yahweh's past favour could never generate an internal state of obligation in a large social group where traditions concerning the past were venerated²⁸. The same we could say of MARK and indeed all the gospels²⁹. They respect and preserve historical tradition in a narrative form, and as such they become instruments for community identity in a way mere fictions could not. The gospels are not fiction, nor are they some middle category such as "fictionalised history", or "historicized fiction"³⁰. They are windows onto Jesus - even if these windows are coloured, like stained glass, rather than totally transparent.

CHAPTER FOUR.
SECTION TWO. NARRATIVE HISTORY.

In section one, we made some initial gestures towards suggesting a relationship between history, historiography and the narrative form relevant to gospel studies. These form part of an argument whose contours were formed in the 1960's and '70's, and which have recently been refined by Paul Ricoeur in his three volumed work entitled, TIME AND NARRATIVE. The debate, which has mostly concerned philosophers of history rather than of hermeneutics, is best summed up under the rubric, NARRATIVE HISTORY (see BIBLIOGRAPHY). "History" here includes both its normal denotations; that is, it denotes both the past, as well as the historian's account of it (what we have been referring to in this thesis as historiography). The narrative history debate has therefore addressed itself to two major issues: (1) The significance of the narrative form in the historian's reconstruction of the past; and, (2) the question whether the past itself already possesses a rudimentary narrativity (story-like form) even before the historian begins his work of reconstruction. For the principal philosophers in the narrative history debate, understanding history has been defined as the process by which the historian makes a coherent and justifiable story out of the historical evidence available to him. At this level there has been something of a consensus. Where the debate has raged most fiercely is over the question whether that story is imposed upon or discovered within the mass of past realities.

With the exception of Kermode and Dan Via, narrative critics of NT texts have completely ignored this debate and, as a consequence, have neglected an aspect of narrative hermeneutics which is crucial for any study of the Bible³¹. If Jesus-history already possesses some kind of

rudimentary narrativity, if Jesus-history is the supreme place of divine activity and therefore the dénouement of the world's story, then it becomes vital for narrative critics to ask whether the narrative form of the gospels is a structure called forth from that history, or one forced upon it. Conversely, if there is no meaning or narrativity inherent within history, if all historiographies are really fictional constructions, then we must ask what truth value that gives the gospels. Frank Kermode's position in all this is relatively simple; as far as he is concerned, historiography is, to quote Arthur Danto, "a narrative structure imposed upon events"³². The world and its history are not like a structured narrative. As Kermode puts it - with more than a suspicion of melancholic existentialism, "world and book, it may be, are hopelessly plural, endlessly disappointing"³³. History is arbitrary and impenetrable, and it only attains the illusion of narrative because of "our impudent intervention"³⁴. It is principally this belief which gives Kermode licence to treat MARK as fiction, as a narrative interpretation forced upon a disordered past. But is this view correct, and are there alternatives ?

Most historians are agreed that the writer who initiated the narrative history debate was W.B.Gallie. His PHILOSOPHY AND THE HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING (1964) explored the connection between history and narrative. For Gallie, the narrative form is the vehicle for what he prefers to call the "historical understanding"³⁵. When we seek to understand past occurrences in real space and real time, we are attempting "to connect, to appreciate continuities, to feel the forward movement" of our subject³⁶. What we are therefore endeavouring to construct is what Gallie calls a "followable" story³⁷. Historical understanding occurs when past human actions which have special interest

to a particular community are interconnected with other human actions and formed into a coherent narrative. As Gallie tersely remarks, "historical understanding is the exercise of the capacity to follow a story"³⁸ and the historian's aim is "to present an acceptable, because evidenced and unified, narrative"³⁹. Historical understanding consequently occurs when the historian sees trends or tendencies which connect a succession of events in spite of discontinuities, contingencies and unpredictabilities. These trends are not explanatory factors dragged into the narrative from outside; they are pattern-qualities in the story itself⁴⁰. Thus, Gallie claims that "history is essentially a story"⁴¹, and because it is story, facts within the mass of history impose themselves "insurmountably" upon the historian as "narratable"⁴². Facts call out to be formed into a followable story.

Gallie's thesis is a great deal more complex than this short summary would suggest and, as subsequent commentators have pointed out, it is fraught with difficulties⁴³. Perhaps the greatest difficulty arises from Gallie's insistence on using the word "history" to cover both past human actions, and the historian's account of them. This sometimes makes it extremely hard to know what Gallie is claiming. For example, when he says that "history is essentially a story", does he mean that history-writing is basically a form of telling stories? Or does he mean that all past time and experience (and by inference, all present and future time and experience) possess an "essential" narrativity? Whatever Gallie's real thoughts on this issue, his ambiguity stimulated considerable discussion. The two historians who have argued most trenchantly that time is not narrative in form are Hayden White and Louis Mink. Hayden White's argument is that historical narratives display a formal coherency that history lacks. As White puts

it, "we do not live stories"⁴⁴. When we retrospectively cast our lives in the form of stories, we create verbal fictions whose continuities are really "fraudulent outlines"⁴⁵. The ideal form of historiography is therefore the chronicle or the annal, because these forms present mere sequences of facts without beginnings, middles and ends⁴⁶. Historical narratives are really verbal fictions because they encode the facts of chronicles and annals as components of specific kinds of plot-structure. They are fictions because history does not possess what White calls *EMPLOIMENT*⁴⁷.

Louis Mink's contribution to the narrative history debate has been his concept of "comprehension"⁴⁸. Mink adopts the Kantian view of "understanding" as a process involving memory, imagination and conceptualization. We understand (conceptualization) when we grasp together (imagination) things which are experienced (memory) separately at a temporal, spatial or logical level. We immediately understand that a tree is a tree because our imaginations link all past experiences of tree-like forms so that we know the object offered to our perception⁴⁹. Mink calls this activity of "grasping things together" *CON-PREHENSION* and he suggests three levels: (1) The level of recognizing objects like trees; (2) The level of grasping things together for purposes of classification; (3) The level of ordering our knowledge into a single system so that we see the world as a totality⁵⁰. It is this third level of comprehension to which the historian aspires. His aim is to achieve a synoptic vision in which antecedent events are presented as contributory or decisive causes of subsequent events. It is his aim to com-prehend or grasp together the disparate realities of the past into a meaningful because emplotted story. These stories are, however, imposed on the past; they are not discovered within it. As Mink puts it, "Stories are

not lived but told. Life has no beginnings, middles or ends...We do not dream or remember in narrative, I think, but tell stories which weave together the separate images of recollection"⁵¹. In short, "narrative qualities are transferred from art to life"⁵².

Against these arguments, there have been a number of writers who have proposed that narrativity is discovered, not imposed. Nathan Scott, in an essay exposing the way in which modern fiction is partly about the impossibility of storytelling ("metafiction"), remarks: "it is by no means so obvious as the literary vanguard of our period imagines that story as such is a necessarily fraudulent way of representing the human reality"⁵³. Stephen Crites, in a much quoted essay entitled THE NARRATIVE QUALITY OF EXPERIENCE, has argued that "the formal quality of experience through time is inherently narrative", that memory, experience and time already possess a kind of incipient narrativity even before we begin our acts of narration⁵⁴. Paul Ricoeur, in TIME AND NARRATIVE, has tackled this issue head on. Ricoeur understands very well the temptation to argue that "narrative puts consonance where there was only dissonance"⁵⁵, that it is a literary artifice which "consoles us in the face of death"⁵⁶. But he also argues that the assertion that narrative falsifies reality is really a gross over-simplification of the problem. For Ricoeur, it is too simplistic to equate reality with disorder and narrative with order. As he continues, "so long as we place the consonance on the side of narrative and the dissonance on the side of temporality in a unilateral way...we miss the properly dialectical character of their relationship"⁵⁷. Experience and time possess "an inchoate narrativity that does not proceed from projecting ... literature upon life"⁵⁸. As such, the historian is not the sole source of that form.

There are therefore two different philosophies of narrative history which one can choose to follow as a NT narrative critic. The more radical view of Hayden White and others has been adopted by Frank Kermode in his analysis of MARK. The more optimistic view deriving from Crites, Ricoeur and others has been adopted by Dan Via in his ETHICS OF MARK'S GOSPEL (1986). One of the questions which Dan Via addresses is whether MARK's plotted time (narrative chronology) corresponds to real time (the actual chronology of Jesus' ministry)⁵⁹. Via recognizes that this question involves the much deeper question of whether history in general and Jesus history in particular already possess a plot before they are narrated. In response Dan Via takes issue with White and Kermode, and fundamentally opposes the idea that time might be disorganized, merely successive and chaotic. He disagrees that historical narratives impose plots on the past. What White and Kermode have done is that they have imposed "on existence a narrative that is annal-like, fractured, and merely successive"⁶⁰. In other words, Via accuses White and Kermode of having a prior expectation of the non-narrative nature of history which they subsequently read into time and experience. In reality what happens in any narrative reconstruction of history is that the historian approaches his sources with the desire to establish the correct and most logical story, only to find that these facts already seem to possess an intrinsically story-like character. This means that "narrative as subjective vision and the real world as object are inseparably fused"⁶¹. A gospel narrative like MARK therefore represents "the imprint of the world as well as the subjective figuration of the author"⁶².

This leaves us in a confusing quandry. Is Kermode right in claiming that people like Via come to history with a prior expectation

of consonance ? Or is Via right in claiming that people like Kermode come to history with a prior expectation of dissonance ? Nicolas Berdyaev has constructed a theology of time which allows for both Via's position (the perception of history as story-like) and Kermode's position (the perception of an unstory-like disorder in history). In Berdyaev's thinking, the Fall has made time a seemingly endless middle without beginning or end⁶³. That is why history appears to the unregenerate, existentialist imagination as meaningless and arbitrary (Kermode's position). However, God has acted in the midst of this seemingly chaotic historical process in such a decisive way that a rational structure to time has begun to emerge. What God's supernatural acts in history indicate is that there is a transcendent narrativity in the world's history after all (Via's position). In such a theological framework, there is room for disorder as well as order, for Kermode as well as Via for, as Robert Alter has written, the biblical view of history contains "two, approximately parallel, dialectical tensions. One is a tension between the divine plan and the disorderly character of actual historical events, or, to translate this opposition into specifically biblical terms, between the divine promise and its ostensible failure to be fulfilled; the other is a tension between God's will, His providential guidance, and human freedom, the refractory nature of man"⁶⁴.

The view offered in this thesis is that there are moments in history where a profound narrativity breaks to the surface of an otherwise apparently fractured reality. Frank Kermode seems to make a similar statement at the end of his *GENESIS OF SECRECY* when, in language strongly reminiscent of Wallace Stevens, he talks of the perception of momentary radiances in an otherwise unfollowable world⁶⁵. The difference

between our view and Kermode's is that these momentary radiances are for us the acts of God recorded in biblical narrative, and supremely in the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of the Word⁶⁶. When order and meaning is therefore described by the biblical writers, it is not the case that they have imposed structure and meaning upon history but rather that the eyes of faith have discerned a purpose in history which resembles the directionality of a story. Thus the events in which God discloses himself provide clues concerning the narrativity of universal history⁶⁷, and nowhere is this more true than in the gospels, for they depict the "kairos" in which the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End of history, enters the middle of time. As Wolfhart Pannenberg has argued, with the resurrection of Jesus, the end of history has dawned upon us ahead of time⁶⁸. The world appears followable after all, because the knowledge of its meaningful conclusion has been revealed in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is because the resurrection of Jesus so illumines history that, in JOHN, the empty tomb marks the supreme turning-point in the disciples' understanding of the words and works of Jesus (Jn 2.22, 12.16). It is the point, where historical understanding is illuminated and where "the story of stories" calls for a narrator.⁶⁹

CHAPTER FOUR.

SECTION THREE. THE HISTORY OF TRUTH AND THE TRUTH OF HISTORY.

I believe that the activity of the fourth evangelist in relation to his historical materials can best be explained by the following analogy: imagine a situation in which you become very interested in a grand-father whom you have never met because he died under tragic circumstances in the Great War at the age of thirty. More than that, the influence of the grand-father's life-history and reported personality is so great that you begin to venerate his memory by collecting all the mementos and photographs of him you can find. One day, you realize that you have collected all the material that can be found and have spoken to all the surviving relatives and friends who knew your grand-father. You sit down and look at all the photographs and written reminiscences. It soon becomes clear to you that you have a very difficult task pasting together a strictly chronological picture of your grand-father's life. You are aware from some of the photographs that your grand-father is older in some than in others, and so you attempt to put some of the photographs in a certain order. However, many other photographs cannot be so neatly dated, and this goes for many of the written reminiscences too. So what you do is you group photographs and reminiscences according to certain themes, subjects, contexts and so on. At the end of the project, what you have achieved is a portrait of your grand-father which is faithful to the materials and memories at your disposal, but which is also a selective interpretation, as all historical reconstruction must be.

In the case of the fourth gospel, the evangelist was given the task of composing a coherent, followable and reliable account of a man he had never met in the flesh, who had died perhaps sixty years before

him, and whose memory he himself was eager to preserve and revere. Certain materials were already available to him: a collection of miracle stories which his community regarded as signs glorifying God; some monologues of Jesus which were the end-product of a complex and lengthy combination of traditional sayings of the earthly Jesus and later prophetic utterances believed to have been the voice of the risen Jesus; a written passion story used in liturgical contexts; a number of resurrection stories; and probably a number of reminiscences deriving from a recently deceased, founding figure in the community known affectionately and reverentially as the beloved disciple (whose death had made the task of publishing an authentic gospel all the more urgent). What did the evangelist do with all this material ? He first of all decided to select some material and reject other. This is indicated in Jn 21.25, where the evangelist admits to the seeming infinity of narrative possibilities: "Still, there are many other things that Jesus did. Yet, were they ever to be written down in detail, I doubt that there would be room enough in the whole world for the books to record them". Nowhere else in the rest of the New Testament is there such a frank admission concerning the vast quantity of oral and even written material concerning Jesus in the decades after Jesus' death - except in Luke 1.1 where the author states that many people had tried to write reports about Jesus.

The evangelist's next task was to fashion his selected material into a meaningful and historically reliable narrative. As in the case of the grand-father's photograph album, a necessary process of artificial organisation had to take place at this stage. The evangelist was too far from the events themselves to be able to provide a strictly chronological account of the ministry of Jesus. Indeed, he seems to

realize that "a strictly chronological account" is in any case an impossibility. His unusually personal reflection in Jn 21.25 shows that he understands all too well that a narrative which laid down every factual detail "one by one" (kath' en) would at the very least have resulted in a work in which the narrative time (the time which it takes to read a narrative) and the story time (the plot-time represented in the narrative itself) would have to be identical. (Imagine a gospel which took three years to read!). So what the evangelist does is he constructs an overall story-time of about three years which is an accurate portrayal of the real time of Jesus' ministry. He maintains the two-to-three year ministry which he finds in his sources and reminds the reader of this time-scale by reporting the three passover festivals which Jesus had celebrated during his ministry. At this second stage, therefore, the evangelist has established his story-time from what he knows of the real time of Jesus' ministry. We might say that real time has dictated story-time, and that JOHN should therefore be regarded as historiography.

However, things are not so simple because the next stage of narrative composition must necessarily have involved the chronological arrangement of individual episodes and discourses within that temporal framework. As in the case of our grand-father investigator, there must have been some uncertainty about the exact chronological order of the facts at this stage, even if the evangelist was sure that these facts (like the photographs in our analogy) reflected actual occurrences. He could have left his material in a chaotic, episodic mess, and no doubt Kermode would have preferred that. Instead, the evangelist decides - like our photograph collector - to arrange his material according to thematic or metaphorical principles. Thus, his placing of the cleansing

of the Temple next to the first Cana miracle is dictated by his perception that in both stories Jesus is replacing the old with something radically new. Jesus replaces the water of the purification vessels with a new, heavenly wine that points to his sacrificial death. He replaces the Temple, the focus of the ancient Jewish sacrificial system, with his own body - which, in death, is to take away the sin of the world. This process of thematic rather than strictly chronological arrangement goes on everywhere in chapters 1-12. In chapter 8 Jesus is the light of the world, so in chapter 9 he is seen bringing physical and spiritual light to the man born blind. In chapter 9 he is seen as shepherd to the lost sheep (he brings the blind man into his fold, as it were) so in chapter 10 Jesus speaks of himself as the Good Shepherd. In chapter 10 Jesus says he is the shepherd who brings life to his sheep, so in chapter 11 he raises Lazarus from the dead.

We can now see that we have a situation where the relationship between JOHN's story-time (the plot-time of the narrative) and the real time of Jesus' historical ministry is ambiguous. On the one hand, it is very probable that his overall scheme of a two-to-three year ministry with frequent visits to Jerusalem is historically accurate. This much is supported by the fact that MARK has obviously contracted Jesus' ministry into one year and appears to have omitted Jesus' visits to Jerusalem before Palm Sunday⁷⁰. On the other hand, when we come to the actual dating of the individual episodes within the story time which JOHN provides, we are faced with a different conclusion. JOHN has the cleansing of the Temple right at the beginning of Jesus' ministry whilst the synoptic gospels have it at its conclusion. JOHN dates Jesus' death on the 14th Nisan (i.e. the day when the passover lambs are being slaughtered in the Temple), whilst the synoptics date the crucifixion on

the 15th Nisan (allowing Jesus to celebrate a passover meal on the Thursday evening). This evidence would suggest that the fourth evangelist represents real time in his overall story time, but that he is - for the most part - forced to organize the chronology of individual episodes *within* that schema with thematic principles in mind⁷¹. He knows that the cleansing of the Temple actually occurred in Jesus' three year ministry, and yet he is unsure when exactly it happened. So he places it at the beginning of Jesus' ministry next to the first Cana miracle because the two stories share a theme which makes for a good overture to Jesus' ministry. Both stories depict Jesus as the Inaugurator of a New Age right at the outset of the narrative.

If JOHN is historically accurate in the matter of his overall story-time, and yet less certain and reliable about the exact date of individual episodes within that story time, does that mean that the fourth gospel is a work of fiction and not a work of history? We have already indicated in section one of this chapter that one way to answer this question is by asking what the evangelist's stance was in relation to his historical traditions. In JOHN, there are several overt statements indicating the evangelist's truth-claim for his material. There is, first of all, the "remembrance motif". Particularly significant are the words of Jesus in 14.25-26, part of which contains a promise to the disciples that the "paraclete" would teach them everything and remind them of all that he had said. As Bruce Woll has pointed out, "the promise has to do with the fate of Jesus' testimony after he is gone. His words will not be forgotten and left behind in the past without effect. After he is gone the successor figure of the Paraclete will keep his words alive in the memory of the disciples"⁷². Such words have obvious ramifications in any discussion of the status of

the gospel for they show that the fourth evangelist was keenly concerned with history, with authoritative tradition, and with accurate remembering. Like John 19.35, they imply a truth-claim for the gospel's testimony, a truth-claim from the lips of Jesus, the evangelist and the Johannine community. One cannot avoid this forceful testimony in the fourth gospel.

Alongside this argument from truth-claim we can include recent arguments for the gospel's historical truth value. Most recently, John A.T. Robinson has contended in his *PRIORITY OF JOHN* (1985) that the fourth evangelist, far from freely composing a high christology out of his copies of the synoptic gospels, was really following a tradition which circulated independently from its pre-synoptic counterparts, and which was *historically more primitive and more reliable than that of the synoptics*⁷³. In itself, this argument was not new. It derived from the work done on JOHN's historical traditions by Dodd, Higgins and Morris in the 1960's and by John Armitage Robinson, Headlam and Askwith⁷⁴. What was important about John A.T. Robinson's book was its systematic amassing of many of the arguments for the historical value of JOHN's traditions in one study. Perhaps Robinson's most important argument in the present context is his argument that the chronology of JOHN has a high degree of plausibility about it, especially since it appears to fill many of the lacunae either explicit or implicit within the synoptic chronologies⁷⁵. As we have already hinted, JOHN's chronology fully explains why the synoptic narratives imply that Jesus must have frequented Jerusalem BEFORE his final week. In JOHN, Jesus travels to and from Jerusalem with some frequency, noticeably at the time of the Jewish feasts. Furthermore, JOHN's chronology, with its two-to-three year ministry, explains why we have the impression that the synoptic

chronologies drastically contract Jesus' ministry. Such positive factors have led many to agree with Raymond Brown that "John is based on a solid tradition which is at times very primitive"; indeed, "John gives us correct historical information about Jesus that no other Gospel has preserved"⁷⁶.

What these comments suggest is that JOHN cannot easily fall into the category of fiction-writing. But neither can it easily fall into the category of historiography because JOHN is quite unlike any other historical biography known to the world. The fourth evangelist is certainly interested in historical facts because, as Stephen Smalley has put it, "he believes that history is the arena in which God's life-giving activity has always - and now decisively taken place"⁷⁷. However, he is also keenly aware that these facts are capable of a supernatural interpretation because, to quote Smalley again, "in and with the tabernacling of the Word of God among men, a final intersection of spirit and matter has occurred"⁷⁸. In other words, the evangelist believes that all the incidents and details of his historical traditions occurred but that they are also potentially sacramental. This should warn us that neither historicism (the belief that JOHN is all history and no interpretation) nor gnosticism (that JOHN is all interpretation and no history) is a sufficient description of the evangelist's historical understanding⁷⁹. JOHN evokes meaning from events, he does not invent events to illustrate meaning. As John Robinson puts it, "the theology is drawing out the history rather than creating it or even moulding it. It is an exercise in "remembering", in the pregnant Johannine sense of reliving the events "from the end", through the mind of the interpreter Spirit, presenting what they "really" meant, in spirit and in truth. It is a meta-history: not any the less historical

the more theologically it is understood, but the depth and truth OF the history⁸⁰.

Sandra Schneiders has expressed this profound truth most elegantly by stating that what JOHN gives is Jesus-history in which the artistic symbol (the Johannine Jesus) liberates the transcendent within the natural symbol (the historical Jesus)⁸¹. The Johannine portrait of Jesus, far from being a fiction, is the most truth-full historiography that exists. In JOHN, the fourth evangelist "has given us in the intensity of artistic liberation the transcendent beauty of the Word of God as it transfigured the face of Jesus"⁸². JOHN is therefore not the same kind of history-writing as, for example, Vincent Cronin's NAPOLEON. That is to say, it is not just a form of writing in which the recoverable facts of an age or a human life are connected into a chronological interpretation. The fourth evangelist is interested in the transcendent and universal truth of his subject, as well as the contingent data in the pre-gospel traditions at his disposal. Indeed, if the author of JOHN knew Aristotle's distinction between poetry (which addresses itself to the universal) and history (which addresses itself merely to the contingent), he would not have accepted either as a legitimate description of his gospel⁸³. JOHN is poetic history; it is a form of history-writing in which a real person is depicted, but in a way that evokes the essential meaningfulness of this reality in and for history. The Jesus of JOHN is truly the incarnation and embodiment of divine Truth. The fourth gospel itself is both the history of Truth AND the truth of History.

The two factors which combine to create this sense of a thoroughly distinctive narrative history in JOHN we have already hinted at: they are JOHN's Christology and his eschatology. JOHN portrays Jesus

as the one in whom the realities associated with the final days (the eschaton) are present. The Jesus of JOHN dispenses eternal life and judgement, the very realities promised at the Last Day. Dilthey often stated that the meaning of our own lives and the meaning of history can only be seen from the end. That is because it is only in retrospect that one sees the totality of the history in question⁸⁴. With the Incarnation as it is understood by JOHN, the end of history enters the here-and-now of our space and time. JOHN's eschatology is therefore inseparable from his Christology. Indeed, JOHN's Christology is really what Ricca calls "personalised eschatology" because "Christ embodies the eschaton and encompasses it; he introduces it into history"⁸⁵. The result of this for the believer is indeed radical and life-changing. By the Spirit (the Paraklētos), Jesus who is the End dwells within the heart of the obedient disciple in the here and now. This means that the believer now understands time and experience in a manner quite different from before. The believer no longer sees history as "a prolongation of the meaningless"⁸⁶ (Brown) but as a followable story. The believer now knows that the world is "teleologically guided" and has "directedness"⁸⁷ (Ricoeur) like the plot of a story. To put it in the language of JOHN, the believer sees history "from above" and not "from below".

These comments highlight the inadequacy of our analogy of the photograph album. In the final analysis, there is really no adequate analogy in any area of historical enquiry for the phenomenon of gospel narrative. All other narrative historiographies are fusions of story-time, real time and narrative time. That is to say, they are works in which the historian constructs a justifiable plot (story-time) - justifiable in the sense that other historians can regard it as a legitimate reflection of the actual order of events in history (real

time) - even if real time must be radically contracted if it is to fit into a single, comprehensible account (narrative or reading time). With the fourth gospel, however, another concept altogether joins this combination of story-time, real time and narrative time. This concept is the concept of *META-STORY TIME* - a perception of time which one might describe as "sub specie aeternitatis". In John 1.19-2.10, the evangelist gives us a story-time of seven days in a narrative time of about five minutes. Whether this reflects the real time of the events themselves is hard to say. What is really important is that these seven days should be seen from the point of view of meta-story time - that is to say, from a divine perspective. From the perspective of meta-story time, the seven days depicted directly after the prologue become redolent of the seven days of Creation, thereby indicating that the beginning of Jesus' ministry is a New Creation⁸⁸. JOHN's meta-story time therefore takes us beyond the boundaries of story, real and narrative time. It is JOHN's meta-story time which helps us to see the history of Jesus "from above" rather than "from below".

This notion of "meta-story" time helps us once again to appreciate the uniqueness of JOHN's narrative historiography. In the construction of "a plot", a composer of narrative has a limited number of "time-shapes" which he can use to bring a sense of order and teleology to his story. David Higdon has identified these as "process time", "retrospective time", "barrier time" and "polytemporal time"⁸⁹. Process time "is usually symbolised by a straight line moving from one point to another"⁹⁰. When an author uses a process time-shape, the reader becomes aware of the movement of time towards a conclusion through the author's use of hours, days, weeks, months and years. With the retrospective time-shape, "we have an individual proceeding through

life, at some point stopping to survey his past, and attempting to make some sense of it"⁹¹. With this time-shape, the author or narrator steps momentarily out of time's flux to consider the past, with the result that he emerges with an altered perception of events. Barrier time-shapes are used in fairy tales and fantasy literature. Stories of this type usually depict a hero who has to complete a quest or an adventure in "a limited number of hours"⁹². It is a time-shape whose prescribed time limit serves to heighten and intensify the actions of the characters. In polytemporal time, finally, the reader loses control of all time references. There is a multidimensional texture to the narrative and a sense of a vertical as well as a horizontal time-scale.

The uniqueness of JOHN consists of the fact that all four of these time-shapes coincide with one another in a manner which is totally innovative in the realm of historiography. First of all, at most points in the fourth gospel one is aware of "process time". This is particularly true at the beginning (1.19-2.11) and the end of the gospel (12.1-ch.20), where temporal markers such as "tē epaurion" (1.35), "hōra...dekate" (1.39), "tē ēmera tē tritē" (2.1), "pro de tēs eortēs tou pascha" (13.1), "ēn de prōi" (18.28) keep the reader in touch with a process of time lasting approximately one week. Secondly, the reader is also aware of a retrospective time-shape in the narrative. This emerges in the remembrance motif which we have already discussed, and also in the frank confession of 21.25. Both of these suggest the presence of a narrator who is standing at the kind of distance from the past which endows it with significance. Thirdly, we have barrier time in the fourth gospel. The frequent mention of the HOUR of Jesus creates precisely this barrier of a prescribed and appointed time in which a work is to be completed (see 13.1 and 19.30). Fourthly, we have polytemporal time in

the constant sense of the merging of two temporal horizons, one meta-historical and one historical. This can be seen in 13.1: "It was just before the Passover feast, and Jesus was aware that the hour had come for him to pass from this world to the Father". In the phrase, "it was just before the Passover feast", the reader is given temporal coordinates which he knows in the real world. But with the concept of the HOUR, the reader is at the same time presented with a totally other-worldly notion of temporality. Meta-historical time is immersed in historical time in this disturbing, polytemporal time-shape.

The fourth gospel consequently presents us with a narrative historiography which not only blends narrative, story, real and metastory time, but also process, retrospective, barrier and polytemporal time-shapes. It is this fusion of temporal dimensions and shapes which partly accounts for the mysterious profundity of the fourth gospel. When we come to examine the Johannine passion narrative in chapter eight, our initial aim will be to show that the passion narrative is based on firm historical tradition. We shall do this by first looking at its truth-claim, and secondly by examining its truth-value (plausibility and sources). We shall then go on to demonstrate that, even though John 18-19 is based on reliable historical tradition, it transcends the category of historiography. John 18-19 is not just a reference text for the history of the passion; it is also a mimesis of the passion - that is, a narrative in which the actions of Jesus at the time of his death are presented in a universal, metahistorical perspective. From this generalisation, we shall proceed to show how the fourth evangelist evokes the universal, metahistorical significance of Jesus' death through his evocation of Old Testament prophecy and through his use of the concept of the HORA of Jesus. These factors provide that

sense of meta-story time which David Higdon would refer to as a polytemporal time-shape. We shall examine how the four dimensions of narrative, story, real and metastory time, and the four shapes of process, retrospective, barrier and polytemporal time, combine in John 18-19 to create a powerful picture of the Cross as the dénouement of history.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR.

1. Frank Kermode, GENESIS OF SECRECY, pp.60-64.
2. Ibid, p.64.
3. Ibid, p.56.
4. Ibid, p.62.
5. Ibid, p.62, and cf.p.84.
6. Ibid, p.109.
7. Ibid, p.120. Kermode describes Hans Frei's new concept of "Geschichtsähnlichkeit" (history-likeness) as "subtle and interesting". On p.120 Kermode quotes Herder who said, "whoever turns a gospel of Christ into a novel has wounded my heart". Obviously Kermode has no qualms about treating MARK and JOHN as realistic novels.
8. Ibid, p.125. No conservative scholar would agree that the gospels are "texts totally lacking transparency on event" (p.121). It would have been very interesting to have heard Frank Kermode and John Robinson, both of Cambridge University, in dialogue over this issue. John Robinson, throughout a lifetime of research on JOHN, had a very high regard for the historical value of JOHN. It is interesting to note that this high regard derived not from "any doctrinally conservative interest" but from "historical grounds" (PRIORITY, p.6).
9. See Dan Via's ETHICS OF MARK'S GOSPEL, pp.213-216.
10. Kermode does not attribute this term to anybody but it in fact derives from Roland Barthes' influential essay, L'EFFET DU REEL, in Communications, 11 (1968), pp.84-89.
11. Meir Sternberg, POETICS OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVE, p.23.
12. Ibid, p.25.
13. Ibid, p.25.
14. Clarence Walhout, TEXTS AND ACTIONS, p.72.
15. Meir Sternberg, POETICS OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVE, p.25.
16. Ibid, p.25.
17. Clarence Walhout, TEXTS AND ACTIONS, p.69.
18. Paul Ricoeur, THE NARRATIVE FUNCTION, pp.186-7.
19. Bernard Cornwell, SHARPE'S ENEMY, Fontana/Collins, 1984. p.
20. Ernest Best, MARK'S PRESERVATION OF THE TRADITION, p.31.

21. Ibid, pp.32-46.

22. Ibid, p.47. i) Inconsistent use of titles. Best claims that "Mark's normal title of confession is "o huios tou theou" (33). He then shows that there are times in Mark's narrative where we would expect this title, but instead get something different, like "o agios tou theou" (1.24). Best puts this down to Mark's desire to leave unchanged what he found in his source. ii) Inconsistent or superfluous information. Best finds a number of words which he has strong reasons for feeling that Mark would have changed if he had not been concerned to preserve tradition (e.g. "amphiballein" in 1.16f). iii) Unmodified tradition. Best regards 8.31, 9.31 and 10.33f as unmodified tradition. All three have "apokteinein" instead of "stauroun" (the word Mark uses in the passion narrative) for Jesus' impending death. iv) Unnecessary or irrelevant logia. Best points to 9.35-50, 11.22-25 and 4.21-25 which show that there are parts of MARK which are only included because the author has retained material from an existing collection. v) Unnecessary retention of names. Levi (2.13), the names of the brothers of Jesus (6.3), Jairus (5.22), Bartimaeus (10.46), Alexander and Rufus (15.21) are examples of names which are not strictly relevant but which MARK preserves because they are in his tradition.

23. Ernest Best, MARK: THE GOSPEL AS STORY, p.141.

24. Eric Auerbach, MIMESIS, p.40f.

25. Frank Kermode, GENESIS OF SECRECY, pp.81-83.

26. Robert Alter, SACRED HISTORY AND PROSE FICTION, pp.13-14.

27. Gary Herion, THE ROLE OF HISTORICAL NARRATIVE IN BIBLICAL THOUGHT: THE TENDENCIES UNDERLYING OLD TESTAMENT HISTORIOGRAPHY. (JSOT. 21. 1981, pp.25-57). p.38.

28. Ibid, p.38.

29. This claim has been made for MARK by Dan Via in his ETHICS OF MARK'S GOSPEL. Via explores "the problem of the truth value of plotted time" in MARK (p.209f) and comes to the conclusion that MARK does not represent "a falsification of the temporality of the real world" because then "Mark's ethic would be seriously compromised" (210). Presumably, what Via is saying here is that the Markan community would not have found this gospel a cogent force for social cohesion and ethical responsibility if they knew that it was fiction or myth. If that is what Via means, then I agree with him.

30. Herbert Schneidau calls biblical narrative "historicized fiction" throughout his SACRED DISCONTENT (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1977). Robert Alter prefers "fictionalized history" in his SACRED HISTORY AND PROSE FICTION (p.8).

31. Frank Kermode shows a slight awareness of the issues surrounding the narrative history debate on pp 117-118 of GENESIS OF SECRECY. Dan Via has a whole section devoted to whether temporality is narrative in structure on pp.209-225 of his ETHICS OF MARK'S GOSPEL, though curiously he does not tune into the narrative history debate itself (he does not mention

(Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1961 - though first published in 1946. pp.231f).

44. Hayden White, THE HISTORICAL TEXT AS LITERARY ARTIFACT, p.43.

45. Ibid, p.44.

46. Hayden White, NARRATIVE AND THE REPRESENTATION OF REALITY. Critical Inquiry, no.7. 1980. Pt.1. Throughout this essay, White argues that the Chronicle is the most valid form for the writing of history.

47. Hayden White, THE HISTORICAL TEXT AS LITERARY ARTIFACT, p.46: "By emplotment here I mean simply the encodation of the facts contained in the chronicle as components of specific kinds of plot-structures, in precisely the way that Frye has suggested is the case with "fictions" in general".

48. Louis Mink, HISTORY AND FICTION AS MODES OF COMPREHENSION, p.548.

49. Mink does not quote Kant, but a useful passage might have been the following: "Now a representation by which an object is given is to become a cognition in general requires *imagination* for the gathering together the manifold of intuition, and *understanding* for the unity of the concept uniting the representations" (CRITIQUE OF JUDGEMENT, London, Collier Macmillan, p.52). This quotation highlights one of the problems with Mink's concept of "com-prehension" for Mink "gathers together" the separate functions of *imagination* and *understanding* in just one word ("comprehension").

50. Ibid, p.549.

51. Ibid, p.558. In his NARRATIVE FORM AS A COGNITIVE INSTRUMENT, Mink writes in a similar vein: "narrative form in history, as in fiction, is an artifice, the product of individual imagination" (p.145).

52. Ibid, p.558.

53. Nathan Scott, THE REDISCOVERY OF STORY, p.147.

54. Stephen Crites, THE NARRATIVE QUALITY OF EXPERIENCE, p.291.

55. Paul Ricoeur, TIME AND NARRATIVE, vol. I. p.72.

56. Ibid, p.72.

57. Ibid, p.72.

58. Ibid, p.74.

59. Dan Via, THE ETHICS OF MARK'S GOSPEL, pp.209-225.

60. Ibid, p.218.

61. Ibid, p.221.

62. Ibid, p.221.

63. Ibid, pp. 215-6.

64. Robert Alter, SACRED HISTORY AND PROSE FICTION, p.14.

65. Frank Kermode, GENESIS OF SECRECY, p.145.

66. John 1.1-18. cf. Nicolas Berdyaev, THE BEGINNING AND THE END, London, Geoffrey Bles, 1952, p.211: "The appearance of Christ the Liberator is a meta-historical fact and it occurred in existential time. But in that central messianic manifestation meta-history breaks through into history, albeit history receives it in a troubled setting".

67. The phrase "universal history" is not without its problems. Louis Mink points out the difficulties with the view that the whole of human history has one, coherent, purposive story-structure. What universal history "never made room for was the uniqueness, vividness, and intrinsic value of individuals, whether of individual persons, individual cultures, or individual epochs". It also meant that the lives of individuals and cultures could only find their significance "in an interpretation that could not in principle be accessible to them in their time" (pp.138-139 of NARRATIVE FORM AS A COGNITIVE INSTRUMENT). On the latter point, we see no problem with a view of history which only becomes completely meaningful in retrospect. Just as our own life-stories cannot be coherently narrated until their conclusion, so the emplotment of history will not be fully appreciated until humanity views the past from its end. As for the charge of anti-individualism, that may well be true of secular thinking on universal history but it certainly is not true of a biblical perception of it. Biblical narrative accentuates the value of the individual and gives prominent attention to the episodic nature of history.

68. Wolfhart Pannenberg, REVELATION AS HISTORY, p.142: "the history of the whole is only visible when one stands from its end", but now "the perfection of history" has already been inaugurated in the resurrection of Jesus, so that we can speak of God "finally and fully revealed". Pannenberg's point is that Jesus has inaugurated the last things ahead of time, as it were. That means that the conclusion of history has entered the apparently meaningless middle of time, and given the believer an awareness of the fundamental, purposive structure of history.

69. The phrase, "the story of stories", comes from Ulrich Simon's STORY AND FAITH IN THE BIBLICAL NARRATIVE. London, SPCK, 1975. pp.53-58.

70. See John A.T. Robinson's PRIORITY, pp.125f.

71. C.H.Dodd (p.10: HISTORICAL TRADITION) writes: "the arrangement of the narrative in the Fourth Gospel is now widely regarded as dictated by the order of thought much more than by the order of events". There are a number of different views concerning the dominant influence upon the evangelist's chronological arrangement of material. Some scholars argue that it is dictated by the actual, historical chronology of Jesus' ministry. John Robinson takes this line in PRIORITY. He has chapters on the chronology of the beginning, middle and end of Jesus' ministry and defends the

historicity of JOHN's presentation. J.E.Bruns, however, wants to speak of JOHN's story time in terms of "Johannine craft" and "artistic perfection" (THE USE OF TIME IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL.p.285). He argues that "the evangelist uses time throughout his gospel for its symbolic value" (p.290). Then there is the view of Aileen Guilding that the chronology of JOHN is composed under the influence of the Jewish lectionaries of the first century (THE FOURTH GOSPEL AND JEWISH WORSHIP, 1960). This view has been successfully quashed and tempered by Leon Morris, who argues for the centrality of the feasts of Tabernacles and Passover in the evangelist's thinking about story time (THE NEW TESTAMENT AND THE JEWISH LECTIONARIES, 1964, pp.64-68). It seems, then, that there are three factors impinging on the evangelist in his construction of his plot; historical, symbolic and liturgical factors.

72. Bruce Voll, JOHANNINE CHRISTIANITY IN CONFLICT, p.97.

73. John A.T.Robinson, PRIORITY, p.33.

74. E.H.Askwith's HISTORICAL VALUE OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL (1910), J.Armitage Robinson's THE HISTORICAL CHARACTER OF ST.JOHN'S GOSPEL (1929), A.C.Headlam's THE FOURTH GOSPEL AS HISTORY (1948), C.H.Dodd's HISTORICAL TRADITION IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL (1963), A.J.B.Higgins' THE HISTORICITY OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL (1960), Leon Morris' STUDIES IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL (1969) and John A.T.Robinson's PRIORITY OF JOHN (1985) all bear witness to the continuing defence of the historical value of JOHN in British scholarship throughout this century. The present thesis stands in that same tradition but differs insofar as it uses narrative history and narrative theory to make the defence of JOHN's historical value.

75. One of the fascinating arguments used by John A.T.Robinson in PRIORITY to show that MARK has contracted the chronology of Jesus' ministry centres on the tiny detail in Mark 6.39 that the grass was green. With the skill of a latter-day Sherlock Holmes, Robinson shows how the greenness of the grass "betokens a season before the summer heat scorches everything brown" - possibly about May. However, the plucking of the ears of corn on the sabbath in Mark 2 must have come from the time of corn-harvest in May or June - which suggests that a year at least has taken place between Mark 2 and Mark 6. MARK however gives the impression that the whole of Jesus' ministry lasts only a year. Clearly he has greatly compressed the real time of Jesus' actual ministry (PRIORITY, pp.126-7).

76. Raymond Brown, JOHN, vol.I, p.xlvii.

77. Stephen Smalley, JOHN: EVANGELIST AND INTERPRETER, pp.171-2.

78. Ibid, p.208.

79. Xavier Léon-Dufour, TOWARDS A SYMBOLIC READING OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.455.

80. John A.T.Robinson, PRIORITY, p.297.

81. Sandra M.Schneiders, HISTORY AND SYMBOLISM IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.374.

82. Ibid, p.375.

83. Paul Ricoeur talks about narrative historiography in the light of Aristotle's differentiation between poetry and history in his NARRATIVE FUNCTION, p.198.

84. See Volfhart Pannenberg's ANTHROPOLOGY IN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE, pp.510-511. In much of what I say about narrative history from a biblical perspective I am indebted to Pannenberg, who in turn was indebted to Dilthey.

85. Paola Ricca, DIE ESCHATOLOGIE DES VIERTEN EVANGELIUMS (Zurich: Gotthelf, 1966), p.179. In our thinking on the inseparability of Johannine eschatology and Christology, we owe much to Ricca and to Johannes Riedl, who argued that the fourth evangelist "christologized" his eschatology (DAS HEILSWERK JESU NACH JOHANNES: Freiburg: Herder, 1973. p.34).

86. R.E.Brown, JOHN, vol.I, p.cxv.

87. Paul Ricoeur, THE NARRATIVE FUNCTION, p.182.

88. M.E.Boismard, DU BAPTEME A CANA, Paris: Cerf.1956, pp.133-159.

89. David Higdon, TIME AND ENGLISH FICTION, p.4.

90. Ibid, p.4.

91. Ibid, p.6.

92. Ibid, p.10.

PART TWO: A NARRATIVE CRITICISM OF JOHN 18-19.

CHAPTER FIVE. JOHN 18-19 AS NARRATIVE CHRISTOLOGY.

SECTION ONE. THE ARREST OF THE SHEPHERD. John 18.1-27.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE AND SUMMARY.

After the lengthy discourses of chapters 15 to 17, we come to "the decisive moment in the Gospel", namely the moment of Christ's passion, death and burial (John 18-19). We have elected to examine 18.1-27 as the first of three sections because 18.1-27 represents the first division of JOHN's passion account. Some scholars have divided 18.1-27 into two separate units, the first dealing with the arrest of Jesus and the second dealing with the denials of Peter (and the concomitant initial interrogation of Jesus by Annas). Most notable amongst these has been Peter Ellis who, in an experimental "composition-critical" commentary on the fourth gospel, divides 18.1-27 into two separate acts (1-12, 13-27), both containing a chiasmic structure involving five scenes². However, it is quite plain that 18.1-27 is meant to be regarded as a single structural unit, with 1-11 foregrounding Jesus and backgrounding Peter, 12-14 as a transitional pericope, and 15-27 (of equal length with 1-11) foregrounding Peter and backgrounding Jesus. Three arguments support this reading: (i) both scenes are rounded off with a reference to the high priest's servant Malchus; (ii) the preservation of 18.1-27 as a single unit results in a passion narrative of three equal parts (A = 18.1-27, B = 18.28-19.16a, C = 19.16b-42, each part approximately 27 verses long); (iii) the evangelist presents a consistent character contrast between Jesus and Peter which runs through the whole of 18.1-27 and which clearly ends at verse 27.

The "kernel" events of 18.1-27 first part are as follows: (a) vv.1-11, Jesus crosses a valley to a garden with his disciples. It is

night-time. Judas arrives at the garden with a detachment of Roman soldiers with the purpose of making arrests. Jesus, outside the garden walls, identifies himself as the one for whom they are searching, and asks that the disciples should be left to go in safety. Peter cuts the ear of the high priest's servant with his sword. Jesus, finally, rebukes Peter. These events can be given the following event labels: a CROSSING, AN ARRIVAL, A THREAT, AN INTERROGATION, A REQUEST, AN ASSAULT and a REBUKE. The antitheses represented are between Jesus and Judas/the arresting party, Peter and Malchus, Jesus and Peter.

(b) vv.12-14 form a narrative bridge in which the narrator provides three important pieces of information; first, that Jesus is bound and taken to Annas; secondly, that Annas was high priest and father-in-law to Caiaphas; thirdly, that Caiaphas was the man who claimed that it was expedient for one man to die for all the people.

(c) vv.15-27, Peter and another disciple follow Jesus. The anonymous disciple goes with Jesus into Annas' courtyard because he is known here. Peter remains outside and has to have the help of this disciple in order to get past the portress. The portress suggests that Peter is a disciple of Jesus. Peter denies it, and goes over to a fire to warm himself. Inside Annas' house, Jesus is questioned about his disciples and his teaching. Jesus tells Annas to ask one of his disciples. Jesus is slapped by an official, whom he rebukes, and sent bound to Caiaphas. Peter, outside the house, denies Jesus two more times and a cock crows. The kernel events of this scene are therefore a CROSSING (into the courtyard), an ARRIVAL, a THREAT, an INTERROGATION and a DENIAL (Peter), an INTERROGATION and an ASSAULT (both directed at Jesus), a REBUKE (by Jesus), a TRANSFERENCE (of Jesus), and two more DENIALS (Peter). In short, actions similar to those in 1-12 are

repeated. The character contrasts in this sub-section are between the anonymous disciple and Peter, Peter and the portress, and - principally - between Jesus and Peter.

CHARACTER CONTRASTS.

A number of antitheses are presented in 18.1-27 between the characters who appear. The main character contrast is between Jesus and Peter. As we have already indicated, sub-section one (1-11) depicts Jesus in the foreground and Peter in the background, whilst sub-section three (15-27) depicts Peter in the foreground and Jesus in the background. That the evangelist establishes this contrast as his major narrative strategy is obvious from a number of factors. First of all, he sets up a deliberate opposition between the twofold response of Jesus to an interrogation (*ego eimi*, in vv.5 and 8) and the twofold response of Peter to an interrogation (*ouk eimi*, in vv.17 and 25)³. Secondly, the evangelist depicts Peter assaulting a servant of the high priest in v.10, whilst Jesus is presented as being assaulted by an official of the same high priest in v.22. Thirdly, the evangelist designs his narrative of Peter's denials so that they are separated by Jesus' response to interrogation in the high priest's house. This creates a highly ironic scene in which Jesus calls forth his disciples as witnesses at the same time as Peter is denying any knowledge of him. Two trials consequently appear to be taking place: an informal trial of Jesus INSIDE the house, and an informal trial of Peter OUTSIDE the house.

At every opportunity it seems as if the evangelist has underlined the differences between Jesus and Peter. Whilst Peter is a somewhat spontaneous hostage to fortune, Jesus exhibits a sovereign control over events. Whilst Peter's conduct smacks of human timidity,

Jesus' speaks of divine composure. A number of significant narrative details foreground this sovereign domination of events by Jesus: first, Jesus goes to a place which Judas knew (v.2), suggesting that Jesus "made no attempt to escape arrest, but went as usual to the place where of an evening He was accustomed to go with His disciples"⁴. Secondly, the narrator informs us that Jesus knew everything that was going to befall him (v.4), and yet he still allowed it to take place. This stresses "the voluntariness of Jesus' acceptance of arrest"⁵. Thirdly, in JOHN's arrest narrative, Jesus goes out to Judas instead of Judas coming to Jesus and kissing him, showing that "the initiative passes to Jesus"⁶. Fourthly, Jesus' use of "ego eimi" in v.5, the "revelatory formula of the divine man"⁷, causes the arresting party to "recoil in fear before the moral ascendancy of Jesus"⁸. Fifthly, Jesus manipulates the situation so that he is taken, but not his disciples (vv.8-9). Sixthly, Jesus' question, "am I not to drink the cup the Father has given me?" (v.11) reveals "confident acceptance"⁹ of suffering, rather than shrinking fear (as in Matthew 26.42). How vividly this sovereign control contrasts with Peter, who is everywhere a victim of circumstances!

Two further character contrasts are posited in the narrative of 18.1-27, the first between the anonymous disciple and Peter, the second between the anonymous disciple and Judas. The second of these is very minor, but there is some irony in the fact that both characters fulfil the necessary function of guide (Judas to the arresting party, the anonymous disciple to Peter), though with very different motives. Judas' incentive to be guide is treachery, the anonymous disciple's is loyalty. By far the more significant contrast is between the anonymous disciple and Peter. The anonymous believer here is undoubtedly the beloved

disciple of 13.23ff since (i) he always appears in close proximity to Peter, (ii) he is consistently faithful as a disciple, as he is here (in following Jesus into the courtyard of Annas' house), (iii) he provides access to Jesus for Peter in 13.23ff (as he does here), (iv) he is called "allos mathētēs" in 20.2 (where it clearly refers to the BD) just as he is called "allos mathētēs" in 18.15. The reasons why the BD is not referred to explicitly as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" are not easy to understand, but two possibilities suggest themselves. First, the anonymity of the BD contrasts emphatically with the complete designation "Simon Peter" (and not just "Peter"), in 18.15. This creates the ironical suggestion that an apparently unknown disciple behaved more faithfully than Peter¹⁰. Secondly, if it is correct that the fourth gospel was forged in the heat of an ardent hostility to Judaism, then the fact of the BD's intimacy with the high priest Annas may well have been a cause of embarrassment¹¹ - especially, as seems likely, if the BD was the founding father of the Johannine community.

The contrast between the BD and Peter centres principally on the idea of "discipleship". In 18.15, the narrator makes the apparently innocuous remark that both Simon Peter and another disciple "followed" Jesus. The verb "akolouthēin" is, at one level, nothing more than a verb of motion explaining how the two disciples managed to be present in the vicinity of Annas' house. At a deeper level, however, the verb "follow" - especially when it has Jesus as its direct object - connotes discipleship, as the noun "follower" indicates. The difference between the anonymous disciple and Peter is highlighted in the fact that the former has easy access in and out of the courtyard, whilst Peter is stuck at the gate, refused entry by a woman-gatekeeper. Paul Duke, who has written a seminal study of the irony in JOHN, makes the important

point that Peter's timid behaviour is in striking opposition with his rather irrational bravado with the high priest's servant. As Duke beautifully puts it, "the sword-slinging defender melts before the word of a servant girl"¹². What we have in the two major sub-sections of John 18 is therefore an antithesis between Jesus and Peter at a primary level, and an antithesis between the BD and Peter at a secondary level. In both instances, the conduct of Jesus and the BD is paradigmatic and exemplary, whilst that of Peter is clearly misguided and coloured by pathos.

IMPLICIT COMMENTARY.

In chapter one, we adopted Tannehill's "narrative Christology" as an apt description of JOHN, on the grounds that the different parts of the gospel appear to be unified by christological "themes". By "themes" here we mean those "basic ideas of narratives which give internal shape and completeness to a sequence of characters and motifs"¹³, and the sorts of unifying Christological ideas which we highlighted there were, for example, the notion of Jesus-as-Judge, the notion of Jesus-as-divine-man (the sevenfold I-AM sayings), the notion of Jesus as sign-worker (the seven semeia), and so on. We saw how these Christological themes recur throughout JOHN, appearing and disappearing with enough regularity for us to discern a coherent narrative Christology.

These themes are either explicitly or implicitly stated; there appears to be a kind of sliding scale from the overt to the allusive - as can be seen in the evangelist's subtle contrasts between light and darkness, and between warmth and coldness in 18.1-27. When, in v.1, we are told that Jesus and his disciples crossed the KIDRON valley, the two

notions of darkness and coldness resonate from the connotations of this proper noun'⁴. When the arresting party arrive with lanterns and torches to capture Jesus in v.3, the reader may feel that some irony is intended here, with Jesus having already been described as the light of the world in ch.8'⁵. When Peter warms himself by the charcoal fire in 18.18, the reader may feel that, again, the evangelist is playing on the irony of Peter's dependence on a man-made "anthrakia" rather than on the light of the world. In other words, the details connotative of light and darkness, and of warmth and coldness, may lead the reader to see an implicit commentary in 18.1-27 deriving from the Christology of Jesus as light and as the true source of human vitality and warmth. Yet again we see how JOHN's narrative details possess a symbolic resonance. We should not be surprised at this fact. The creative activity of the Logos in the world means that "everything is potentially sacramental"⁶, including lanterns and fires.

It is possible for the reader to understand 18.1-27 as an implicit commentary on the truth enunciated in 1.5 that "the light shines on in the darkness, for the darkness did not overcome it". But is this theme of Jesus-as-light the only Christological thought controlling the emplotment of the arrest - emplotment here understood as the evangelist's selection, combination and expression of his traditional material ? Whilst the commentaries are confident about the central Christological themes in the rest of the passion narrative (i.e. in 18.28f, and 19.16f), they are less certain about the Christology behind 18.1-27. This is largely because its delineations are allusive rather than explicit. However, two of the best known Johannine commentators have made isolated and undeveloped remarks which indicate a direction which we could go in. First, C.K.Barrett has written of Jesus' desire

for his disciple's safety in 18.7 that "it seems to be John's primary intention to show, in *an acted parable*, that the "Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (10.11)¹⁷. Secondly, Barnabas Lindars, commenting on the text in 18.9 ("This was to fulfil what he had said, 'I have not lost even one of those whom you have given me'"), suggests that its most logical background is 10.29, where Jesus says of his sheep, "My Father, as to what He has given me, is greater than all, and from the Father's hand no one can snatch them away"¹⁸. He makes much of the fact that there is no flight of the disciples in JOHN, arguing that such a desertion, understood via Zechariah 13.7 as a scattering of the sheep, would have undermined Jesus' status as a "good shepherd"¹⁹.

Barrett and Lindars have started on an avenue of investigation which is promising, for there is no doubt in this writer's mind that the evangelist intended a number of narrative echo effects with the pastoral discourse in John 10.1-21. However, John 10.1-21 is by no means unproblematic since there are a number of difficulties with its form. For instance, it is not easy to see what literary background lies behind this pastoral imagery, nor what sources have been used, nor what relationship the text has to its enveloping narratives²⁰. In this context, however, we are interested in the final form of the discourse rather than its complex textual pre-history. Four things should be said about it:

(1) The structure of John 10.1-21 falls into a tripartite pattern. Section one, vv.1-6, forms a general picture of shepherds and their relationship to their sheep and the sheep-pen. Section two, vv.7-18 constitutes an allegorical elaboration of this picture in which Jesus identifies himself with two elements from vv.1-5. This second section is further divided into two sub-sections, with vv.7-10 dealing with Jesus

as the door of the fold, and vv.11-18 with Jesus as the good shepherd. Both these sub-sections contain two "ego eimi" sayings, at verses 7 and 9, and 11 and 14 respectively. A recurrent theme in the second sub-section is "laying down his life for the sheep", at vv.11,15,17,18. The third sub-section, vv.19-21, describes the division amongst the people which this teaching caused, verse 20 depicting the negative response, and verse 21 the positive response²¹.

(ii) The genre of vv.1-5 is explicitly described by the narrator as PAROIMIA (v.6). As has often been pointed out, the synoptic gospels use *parabolē* whilst JOHN uses *paroimia*²². Nothing exceptional is seen in this because *parabolē* and *paroimia* are both used as synonymous translations of MASHAL in the LXX and other sources. However, some commentators have suggested that the nuances of *paroimia* are slightly different from *parabolē*. Lightfoot describes a *paroimia* as a "symbolic word-picture"²³, Schnackenburg as a "cryptic discourse"²⁴. Brown, whilst stating that there is no great difference between *paroimia* and *parabolē*, also maintains that "there may be more emphasis on the enigmatic in *paroimia*"²⁵. The challenge of the reader of 10.1-21 is therefore to penetrate the hidden dimensions of the discourse.

(iii) There is an overall setting implied in the narrative world of shepherds and sheep introduced in 10.1. All the action implied in this discourse takes place in and around an "aulē" (translated "sheepfold" in most versions). *Aulē* denotes two possible scenarios: a sheepfold erected at pasture time out in the open and outside a village, or a sheepyard pertaining to and adjoining a house²⁶. The sheep are enclosed within this fold during the night, protected from wolves, robbers and other predators by a gatekeeper and by the shepherd. In the dark hours of the early morning, the shepherd goes in and out of the fold to lead his

flock to pasture. The setting within the narrative world of John 10 is therefore as follows:

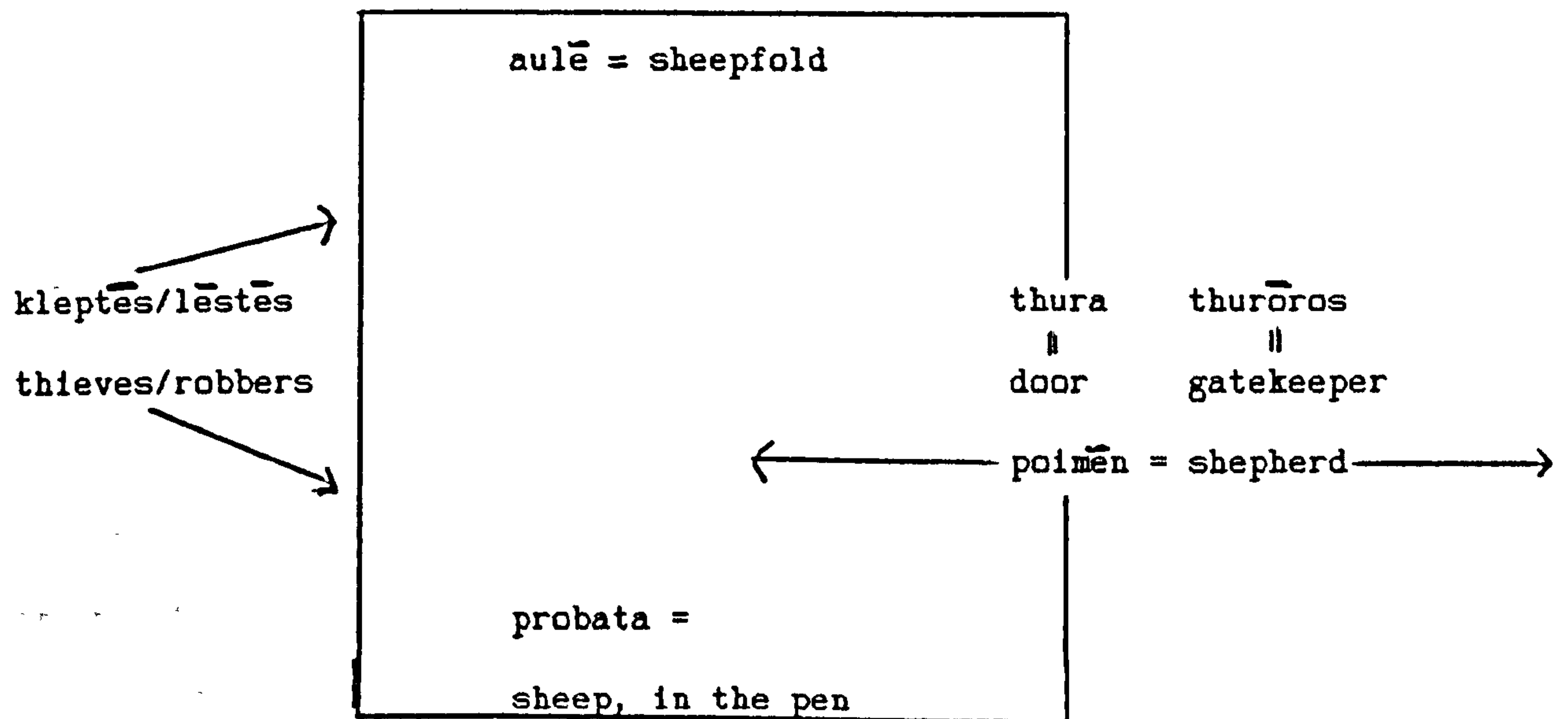


Figure 7.

iv) The pastoral picture as a whole is constructed upon a number of significant character contrasts. These narrative oppositions are best expressed using Greimas' model for the study of all narrative performances, though we acknowledge both the limitations of this model, as well as the fact that John 10.1-21 does not constitute a single narrative with a discernible plot:

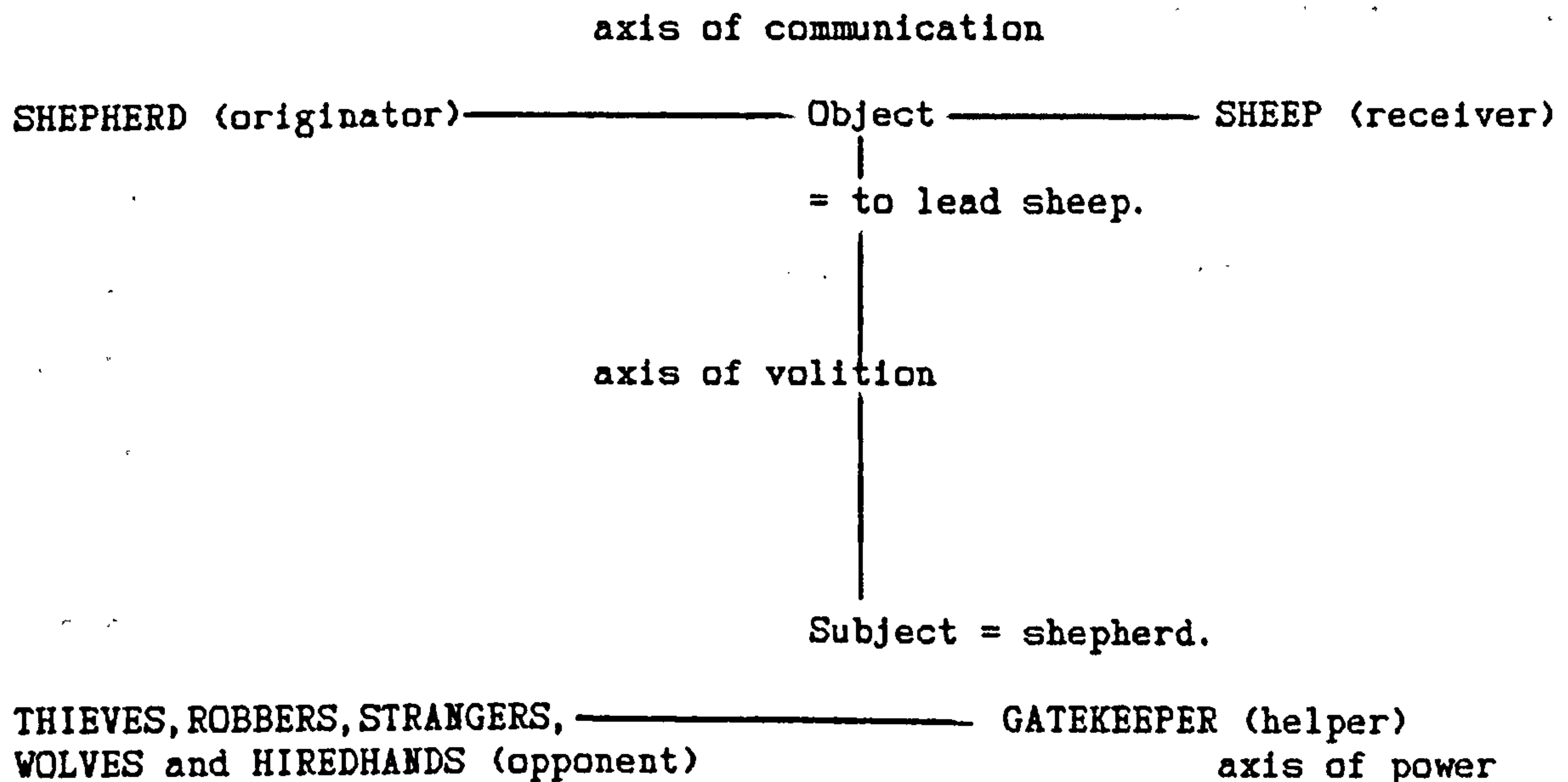


Figure 8.

The top horizontal axis is what Greimas calls the "axis of communication", and in this case this is constituted by the shepherd (the originator) calling his sheep out of the fold to pasture. The middle vertical axis is the axis of volition, and the quest implied in this instance is the shepherd's (subject) desire to lead his sheep safely to and from their pen (object). The bottom line is the axis of power, and the struggle which the shepherd experiences in the attainment of his goal is caused by marauding thieves, robbers and wolves, and by incompetent hired-hands and strangers (opponents). He is, however, assisted by the "thurōros" or gatekeeper (helper), who ensures that no one enters the fold by the gate except the shepherd.

What, then, has this rather terse set of images got to do with the narrative of Jesus' arrest and Peter's denials in John 18.1-27 ? If we take the narrative of Jesus' arrest first, we can see that there are a number of narrative echo effects deriving from John 10 in 18.1-11. First of all, the narrative settings are similar, with the action of 18.1-11 occurring in and around a walled enclosure during the hours of

darkness²⁷. Secondly, Judas' approach to the garden enclosure mimics the approach of the "kleptēs" in John 10, a connection which seems to be borne out by the description of Judas as *kleptēs* in 12.6. Thirdly, Jesus' protective stance towards the disciples (he stands outside the walled garden whilst they huddle inside) imitates the protective conduct of the shepherd throughout John 10, as is indicated by the reference to 10.27ff in 18.9. Fourthly, John 10 itself anticipates this first step towards the passion with its recurrent stress on the shepherd laying down his life for the sheep. Thus, in diagrammatic form, the connections between John 10 and 18.1-11 look like this:

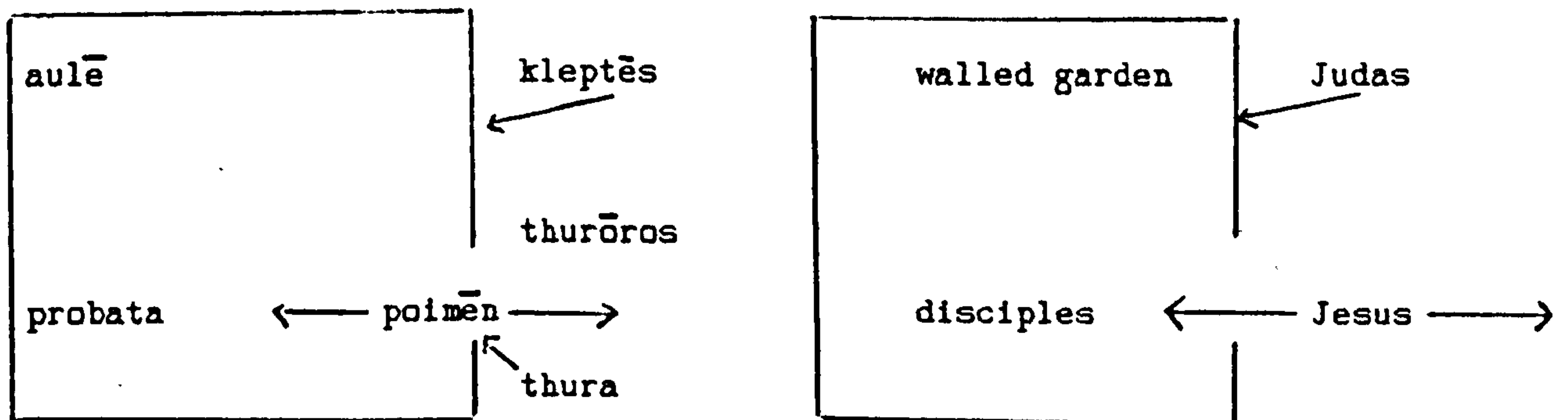


Figure 9.

The connections between John 18.15-27 and the pastoral discourse in John 10 are more allusive than the above, and they centre on three details: (a) the courtyard of the high priest's house, which is described in John 18.15 with the same word which is used for the sheepfold in John 10.1 (*aule*); (b) the *thurōros* at the entrance of Annas' courtyard, which recalls the *thurōros* at the entrance of the sheepfold in 10.3 (which may explain why John 10 has this otherwise unnecessary detail); (c) the anonymous disciple goes in and out of the *aule* in 18.15-16 (a movement which has puzzled scholars²⁸), just as the shepherd in 10.2-3 goes in and then out of the fold. The implication of

these narrative echo effects is that the anonymous disciple is the shepherd of the symbolic word-picture in 10.1-5, whilst Peter is nothing more than a hiredhand who flees in the hour of danger (though Peter's flight is a metaphorical flight from confession in JOHN, not a literal desertion). Peter is not yet a shepherd like his Master, willing to lay down his life for the sheep. That honour will be given to him later (John 21.15-19). Diagrammatically, these connections or narrative echo effects can be drawn up as follows:

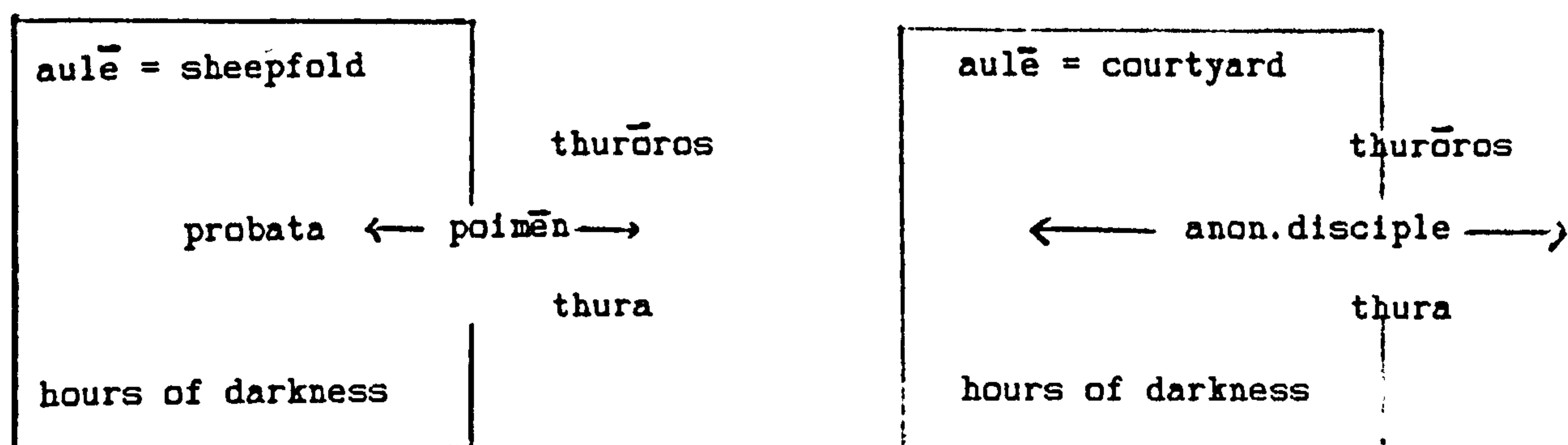


Figure 10.

CONCLUSION.

C.H.Dodd once wrote of JOHN that "the links which connect one episode with another are extremely subtle. It is rather like a musical fugue. A theme is announced, and developed up to a point; then a second theme is introduced and interwoven with the first, then perhaps a third, with fresh interweaving, until an intricate pattern is evolved"²⁹. This is what we have discovered in our narrative reading of John 18.1-27. Through a holistic analysis of the fourth gospel, we have discovered patterns of recurrence in 18.1-27 which derive from a much earlier part of the gospel, John 10. John 10 is certainly not the only source of some of the imagery and diction of 18.1-27, but it is perhaps the most

interesting quarry for an understanding of John 18.1-27 as narrative Christology. It is our belief that narrative criticism has detected these overtones because it is essentially an exercise in imaginative reading. Looking at John 18.1-27 as narrative, has led us to penetrate some of the rich poignancy of the Jesus-as-shepherd image, and some of the biting irony of the Peter-as-hireling image - qualities which undoubtedly are overlooked in methods exclusively concerned with diachronic matters (such as sources). Narrative criticism does not primarily involve the kind of scientific detachment associated with historical criticism. It requires an active reader response, for it involves providing those missing links which bring schemata together into an intelligible narrative Gestalt³⁰.

CHAPTER FIVE.

SECTION TWO. THE TRIAL OF THE KING. John 18.28-19.16a.

NARRATIVE SUMMARY.

The second narrative section of the Johannine passion narrative comprises the story of Jesus' trial before Pilate. After the third denial of Peter, Jesus is led from Caiaphas' house to the palace of the Roman governor. Because the Jews want to eat the Passover, they remain outside Pilate's residence. This forces Pilate into a situation where he has to come outside to the Jews if he wishes to question them, and to go inside to Jesus if he wishes to question him. Pilate begins his hearing by trying to ascertain the charges brought against Jesus. The Jews will not specify a charge, nor will they back down. So Pilate has to ask Jesus whether he is the King of the Jews. Jesus replies that he is a king, but not the sort of king either Pilate or the Jews have understood. Pilate, frustrated, goes back to the Jews and asks whether they want Jesus released. The Jews cry for Barabbas instead. Pilate then has Jesus flogged. His soldiers humiliate Jesus. Pilate brings Jesus out to the Jews again, but the chief priests and officials demand crucifixion. Pilate again pleads Jesus' innocence. The Jews, however, claim that Jesus has called himself God as well as King, thereby setting himself up against Caesar. The Jews eventually get their way with the statement, "We have no King but Caesar". This narrative can be summed up under the following event labels: TRANSFERENCE, INTERROGATION, HUMILIATION, INTERROGATION, CHARGE, APOSTASY, CONDEMNATION.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE.

R.H. Strachan was one of the first scholars to recognize the architectural subtlety of the narrative structure in this section. He

pointed out that "the trial is presented dramatically in a series of scenes, which are laid out alternately outside and inside the praetorium"³¹. In scene one (18.28-32), Pilate meets the prisoner and his accusers OUTSIDE the Praetorium. In scene two (18.33-38a), Pilate conducts his first interview with Jesus INSIDE the palace. He asks Jesus whether he is the King of the Jews. In scene three (18.38b-40), Pilate goes OUTSIDE again to the Jews who demand Barabbas instead of Jesus. In scene four (19.1-3), Jesus is scourged and mocked INSIDE the palace. In scene five (19.4-7), Pilate takes the scourged Jesus OUTSIDE and exhibits him. In scene six (19.8-11), Pilate questions Jesus INSIDE the Praetorium. In scene seven (19.12-16a), Pilate takes Jesus OUTSIDE to the Jews for the final confrontation. In other words, Pilate goes "back and forth from one to the other in seven carefully balanced episodes"³². The first and the seventh episode clearly correspond, since scene one presents the Jews handing Jesus over to Pilate, whilst scene seven depicts Pilate handing Jesus back over to the Jews. The purpose of this structure is twofold: first, to give external expression to an inner struggle within Pilate's soul, and secondly, to indicate the dubious nature of the trial through the separation of accusers and defendant.

CHARACTERIZATION.

a) PILATE.

Pilate's characterization in John 18.28-19.16a undergoes a subtle and consistent development. To begin with, Pilate is a calm, political pragmatist. Without any hint of weakness he enquires after the charge against Jesus (v.29). Pilate's question here is "an expected legal formality" manifesting a degree of officious apathy³³. "For him, Jesus is an ordinary man, a case like many others"³⁴. However, the

somewhat sarcastic response of the Jews ("If this fellow were not a criminal...we would certainly not have handed him over to you", v.30) upsets Pilate, so he responds rather gruffly that the Jews ought to go and try Jesus themselves (v.31a). This gesture now succeeds in unsettling the Jews, who reveal the real reason why the hearing has to be before Pilate: "We are not permitted to put anyone to death" (v.31b). Aware that this request for the death penalty implies a serious crime on Jesus' part, and presumably aware of the rumours that Jesus has set himself up as a royal pretender, Pilate decides to give up trying to discover the charge from the Jews and ask Jesus himself. However, when Pilate asks Jesus whether he is a king, he is confronted by the same apparently stubborn evasiveness as he was with the Jews. Jesus does not answer his question. He throws a question back, causing Pilate to lose his cool and cry angrily, "Surely you don't think that I am a Jew ?" (v.35). As Strachan puts it, "his procuratorial dignity and impartiality are impugned"³⁵.

Pilate's approach remains pragmatic and impartial, even though he has clearly been unsettled by the lack of response from both accusers and defendant. So he returns to the real issue in hand. "What have you done ?" he asks Jesus (v.35), a question which promptly evokes a gnomic and somewhat esoteric non-sequitur on the subject of Jesus' other-worldly sovereignty: "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom belonged to this world, my subjects would be fighting to save me from being handed over to the Jews. But, as it is, my kingdom does not belong here" (v.36). Pilate, latching onto the word "king", then asks, "So then, you are a king ?" which again evokes a rather terse description of Jesus' royal purpose, which is to speak about the "truth" (v.37). To which Pilate replies, "Truth...and what is that ?" - not a cruel taunt,

nor philosophical playfulness³⁶, nor even melancholic skepticism³⁷, but the frustrated exclamation of a man who has expended time and energy trying to get at the truth through a questioning of both accusers and defendants, but with absolutely no success. "Truth" for Pilate means "the facts of the case". "Truth" for Jesus connotes "the eternal reality which is beyond and above the phenomena of the world"³⁸. Pilate and Jesus, in other words, are speaking at different levels. They are, to put it poignantly, at "cross"-purposes.

Pilate is now certain that the defendant is innocent and no real threat to the Roman state. Desperate to extricate himself from his unwelcome dilemma, he seizes on a Passover amnesty in a moment of diplomatic inspiration and offers the Jews the opportunity to drop the charge and take Jesus back (vv.38-40). However, a number of weaknesses in his approach betray the extent to which Pilate has been unsettled. First of all, by offering the Jews the opportunity to take Jesus under the amnesty, he in one breath declares Jesus innocent and yet proposes to treat him as guilty³⁹. Secondly, if Pilate intends the Passover amnesty to act as "a bridge for the accusers so that they can withdraw from this farce without loss of face"⁴⁰, he makes his task singularly difficult by referring to Jesus at this point as "king of the Jews" (v.39) - a title which he must have known would not endear him to the accusers. Inevitably, therefore, the Jews opt for Barabbas, and Pilate is consequently trapped into doing the very thing which he has taken the greatest trouble to avoid - punishing Jesus. Pilate is trapped by expediency into forsaking the very principles of justice which it is his duty to uphold.

Pilate's next move (19.1-5), in which he has Jesus flogged and in which he allows Jesus to be humiliated by his soldiers, is a further

attempt to avert a judicial catastrophe. Bultmann sees the scourging and the mocking of Jesus as an attempt "to make the person of Jesus appear to the Jews as ridiculous and harmless, so that they should drop their accusation"⁴¹. That is why Pilate "yields part way to the desire of the world"⁴². "Jesus arraigned and arrayed in this way is designed to awaken the pity of the Jews"⁴³. However, Pilate's plan again misfires. Pilate's somewhat drastic attempt to evoke a spirit of pity in the Jews through such a cathartic spectacle is an indication of the extent to which he misjudges the perverse motivation of the accusing party. His "Behold the man!" is intended to create sympathy out of pathos, but the gesture fails to take into account "the common principle that when you have wrongfully injured a man you hate him all the more"⁴⁴. Pilate's exhibition of this "caricature of a king"⁴⁵, far from diminishing the blood-lust of the Jews, actually seems to intensify it. The crowd, their vengeance unassuaged, cry in rabid unison, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" (v.6a). Pilate, no doubt deeply disturbed by the irrational violence of the clamour, tries to yield the initiative and responsibility back to the Jews. "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him" (v.6b).

At this stage in the narrative, there is considerable dramatic tension. All along, the reader has suspected that the Jews are, in fact, playing a game with Pilate. Indeed, it is precisely this fact which has so unsettled him. The Jews have held back from making their most explicit and damning accusations. In 19.7, however, they begin the subtle process of suggesting hard, concrete charges to Pilate. They claim that Jesus has claimed to be God's Son. At this point, the narrator gives us an inside view into Pilate's psychology. He says, "Pilate was more afraid than ever" (v.8). Perhaps it was a fear arising

from the threat to political stability and to his own safety which messianic pretenders habitually engendered. Or perhaps Bultmann is again correct in saying that the suggestion that Jesus might be some kind of THEIOS ANER means that, "for Pilate Jesus becomes sinister"⁴⁶. All the way through the trial, Jesus' silence and bearing has made him an enigmatic figure surrounded by an aura of the uncanny. Now the idea of deity has been implanted in Pilate's mind by the subtle power of the accusers' suggestions. Pilate therefore timidly asks, "Where do you come from?" (v.9) - the key question about Jesus in the fourth gospel. Implicit in this is the more important question, "Are you from heaven or from earth?" But Jesus, again, refuses to answer.

Pilate's fear now reduces him to a desperate remark about his authority to release or condemn Jesus (v.10), a grandiose claim which hardly rings true when Pilate has already tried twice, unsuccessfully, to release Jesus⁴⁷. Jesus proceeds to point out the irony and indeed the implied blasphemy in Pilate's pompous and defensive remark by stating that Pilate's authority is given by God, and not something he wields of his own free will. As Lindars puts it, "Pilate's unqualified claim to be above reason and justice, like an absolute monarch, makes him ascribe to himself almost the divine prerogative which is actually true of Jesus"⁴⁸. The effect which Jesus' analysis of Pilate's authority has is to reinforce the numinous fear which has already surfaced in him. So he tries to set Jesus free yet again (v.12a). But the Jews point out that setting Jesus free would negate Pilate's status as friend of Caesar, since anyone who pretended to royal status automatically set themselves up against the Emperor (v.12b). At this, "fear of the world and fear of the mysterious come into conflict"⁴⁹. In the end, Pilate's fear of being reported to the most suspicious of emperors engulfs even his "anxiety

before the numinous"⁴⁹, and Pilate's resistance is broken. He appears to sit Jesus down on the judgement seat before the Jews and shouts, sarcastically, "Look, here is your king!" (v.14). Pilate's mockery goes unnoticed. The Jews respond with the words that constitute their trump card, "We have no king other than the Emperor." And the narrator laconically remarks that Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified (v.16a).

Pilate's characterization is a subtle and indeed a brilliant artistic achievement, which combines historical reminiscences with a sensitivity towards dramatic effect. For Culpepper, Pilate "represents the futility of attempted compromise"⁵⁰. For Brown, "Pilate's story...illustrates how a person who refuses decisions is led to tragedy"⁵¹. But Pilate is not ultimately a character whom the reader of this narrative is supposed either to pity or to condemn. He may be an example of the impossibility of neutrality, but his dilemma is not so much of his own making as scholars have traditionally asserted. Pilate's indecisiveness may be a lamentable feature of his character, but that indecisiveness itself is directly caused by the fact that no one, at any point, answers the perfectly legitimate questions which he asks. Jasper has written that the characteristic of the Johannine trial narrative is its "discontinuous dialogue"⁵². As Jasper puts it, "Pilate never gets a straight answer to his question", a fact which has a singularly "dislocating effect" since Jesus is consequently "always slipping out of focus"⁵³. Jesus' language seems to point to "a realm which utterly transcends the assumptions underlying all such perfectly reasonable questions as those of Pilate"⁵⁴. We should not, therefore, be too hard on Pilate. His magnificent rediscovery of composure, stature and dignity in 19.22 ("What I have written, I have written") reinforces the truth

that the ones who handed Jesus over to Pilate were guilty of a greater evil (v.11).

b) THE JEWS.

The ones who handed Jesus over to Pilate were the Jews in 19.11. and it is to them that we now turn. Urban von Wahlde has shown that in JOHN connote "a certain class (or classes) of persons within Palestinian society" characterised by "a note of constant, intense hostility toward Jesus"⁵⁵. The Jews in JOHN do not refer to the Jewish nation as a whole, but to the Jewish authorities - as can be seen, for example, from the fact that in 11.45-52 the authorities are designated as Pharisees, whilst in 18.12-14, when the same passage is recalled, the same authorities are identified as "the Jews". Only 6.41,52 deviates from this norm, and these verses are rightly regarded as later, redactional additions. All other passages exemplify this "uniquely and characteristically Johannine"⁵⁶ reference to the authorities. As for the character of this collective, Culpepper has commented that the Jews are "associated with all the negative categories and images in the gospel: the world, sin, the devil, darkness, blindness and death"⁵⁷. As Culpepper continues, "through the Jews, John explores the heart and soul of unbelief"⁵⁸. This is borne out in the second narrative unit of JOHN's passion account.

The Jews in 18.28-19.16a are extremely cunning in the gradual way they persuade Pilate of the necessity of Jesus' execution. They begin by incriminating Jesus very generally as an "a criminal" (18.30). In 19.7 they progress to a charge that Jesus claimed that he was the Son of God. Finally, in 19.12ff, they accuse Jesus of being an enemy of Caesar. In this progression in their accusations, the Jews delay the

most important charge (the one that will most persuade Pilate) until the end. The specific motivation for all this is to have Jesus crucified on a Roman gibbet, an incentive that will lead to a perverse neglect of Pilate's threefold protestation of Jesus' innocence. The utterly demonic nature of this rationale is suggested by the use of "paradidōmī" in 19.11, a verb normally reserved for Judas who, in JOHN represents "the humanization of the cosmic forces of evil"⁵⁹. As far as the Jews are concerned, the end thoroughly justifies the means, even if the means involve hypocrisy and apostasy on their part. That is why in 18.28, when they refuse to enter Pilate's house, they will show more concern for ritual purity than moral integrity. That is why they will falsely denounce Jesus as a political criminal in one breath and demand the release of a real political evil-doer, Barabbas, in the next (18.40). That is why they will misquote the Passover Nismat in 19.15, changing the words "We have no King but Thee" (Yahweh) to "We have no King but Caesar!"⁶⁰. Little wonder that Hoskyns referred to the Jewish authorities here as "the instruments of the Prince of darkness of this world"⁶¹.

c) JESUS.

A minor theme in this section of the passion account is that of Jesus as the true Judge who is ironically under judgement. In some senses the whole of JOHN could be described as an extended trial narrative, because there are very few moments when Jesus is not under judgement from the Jews, whilst at the same time being disclosed as the true Judge. This comes to a climactic ironical expression in 19.13 when the narrator leaves it highly ambiguous whether Pilate sits Jesus down on the judgement seat, or whether Pilate sits himself down⁶². Although

Pilate does not ~~make~~ Jesus a judge here, his mocking and acerbic gesture has a double meaning to it revealing to the implied reader that Jesus really *is* the judge which this prominence insinuates. During the trial proceedings before Pilate, furthermore, this seems to be suggested by the fact that it is very often Jesus who is interrogating Pilate, rather than vice versa. Jesus is ironically the judge who is judged.

By far the most important theme of this section is the theme of Jesus as the true King - ironically, the very thing with which he is charged. This is given expression in a number of places, either explicitly or implicitly. In fact, just as 18.1-27 is in some senses a symbolic sequence depicting Jesus as the good shepherd, 18.28-19.16a is also a symbolic sequence depicting the proclamation and enthronement of a King⁶³. If one was to ignore the tone with which certain statements are made, one could read Pilate's question, "do you want me to release the King of the Jews?" as THE PRESENTATION OF THE KING; the mocking of Jesus (in which a crown of thorns is placed on his head and a purple robe over his shoulders) as the INVESTITURE OF THE KING; the continuous arraignment of Jesus with the words, "Hail! King of the Jews!" as the RECEPTION OF THE KING; the "behold your king!" in 19.15 as THE PROCLAMATION OF THE KING; the crucifixion of Jesus with the royal titulus above his head as THE ENTHRONEMENT OF THE KING, and the burial in the garden amidst lavish gifts as THE BURIAL OF THE KING. As Duke has noticed, "Jesus is called king no less than eleven times in the Johannine Passion account"⁶⁴, and most of the references occur in this trial narrative - a narrative in which Jesus is quite explicit about the nature of his kingship and his kingdom. Thus, we should concur with Barrett's comment that "John has with keen insight picked out the key of the passion narrative in the kingship of Jesus, and has made its meaning

clearer, perhaps, than any other New Testament writer⁶⁵. The characterization of Jesus in this section is therefore dictated by central Christological themes.

CONCLUSION.

The artistic achievement of the evangelist's narrative of the trial of Jesus before Pilate is evident in the structure and characterization in 18.28-19.16a. As we have already seen, the evangelist brilliantly creates two stages, one outside the praetorium and one inside, and presents Pilate toing and froing between the two. The momentum and pace of the plot is increased as the encounters between Pilate and the Jews, and between Pilate and Jesus, become progressively more confrontational⁶⁶. The depth of the narrative's meanings derives from the highly innovative way in which the evangelist manages to evoke nuances of Jesus' kingship in even the most unpromising details. The brilliance of the characterization consists of the way in which the evangelist suggests truths, particularly about Pilate, through artful reticence. JOHN's picture of Pilate is indeed laconic, but much is suggested about his state of mind through his verbal gestures, a restraint not found in the replete descriptions of modern fiction.

CHAPTER FIVE.

SECTION THREE. THE SLAUGHTER OF THE LAMB. John 19.16b-42.

NARRATIVE SUMMARY.

Having handed Jesus over, Pilate's soldiers escort Jesus, who carries his own cross, to the place of execution. He is crucified between two others. Pilate places a titulus above Jesus' cross which reads, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews". The Jews object, but Pilate remains undeterred. Meanwhile, the executing party divides Jesus' clothes amongst themselves. Jesus utters his last words to his mother and to the beloved disciple. After this, Jesus bows his head and dies. A while later the soldiers return to finish the victims off, but they find Jesus already dead. All the same, one of the soldiers pierces Jesus' side with a lance, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. Later, two men collect Jesus' body, embalm it and bury it in a new tomb nearby. All this occurs on the Jewish day of Preparation, when the sacrificial lambs were being prepared for slaughter in the Temple. These actions can be given the following event labels: TRANSFERENCE, EXECUTION, PROCLAMATION, DIVISION OF SPOILS, LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT, DEATH, MIRACLE, BURIAL.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE, PLOT AND THEME.

Section Three of JOHN's passion account is divided into seven small episodes⁶⁷. Scene one, vv.16b-18, sets the scene of the crucifixion. Scene two, vv.19-22, presents the titulus and the reaction of the Jews. Scene three, vv.23-24, portrays the division of Jesus' clothes by the four soldiers in the executing party. Scene four, vv.25-27, describes Jesus' provision for his mother and the Beloved Disciple. Scene five, vv.28-30, concentrates on Jesus' last moments, his thirst and the handing over of his spirit. Scene six, vv.31-37, focusses on the flow of blood and water from Jesus' side. Scene seven, vv.38-42, depicts

Jesus' burial. Further evidence of structural activity on the part of the evangelist is visible in the contrast between scenes three and four, the first of which presents four soldiers around the cross, the second of which portrays four women around the cross⁶⁸. Scene four, Jesus' last words, constitutes the centre-piece of the overall narrative. The setting of the last scene of the passion account in a garden (19.38-42) mirrors the setting of the first scene of the passion account (18.1ff), creating a neat *inclusio* within the chapters as a whole. There is also the suggestion of an *inclusio* within this narrative section itself, since there is a deputation to Pilate very near its beginning (the chief priest's complaint in v.21), and a deputation to Pilate very near its conclusion (Joseph of Aramathea's request for Jesus' body in v.38).

What this structure presents us with is a narrative catena of seven logically sequential episodes. The topography depicted within these seven episodes is confined to the area of execution until the burial scene in verse 41. The story time of 19.16b-42 is indicated in verse 31, where we learn that the execution took place on the Friday of Passover week, with the Passover sabbath near at hand. The actual hours of Friday which 19.16b-42 cover are discernible from the previous narrative section. In 18.28, we learn that Jesus was taken to Pilate's house "very early in the morning". The early hour referred to would be between 3.00am and 6.00am, though probably nearer 6.00am since the narrator reports a cock crowing at 18.27⁶⁹. In 19.14, we learn that Pilate's final capitulation to the Jew's demands for Jesus' execution occurred at "almost noon of the day before the Passover", again underlining the fact that the execution of Jesus took place on the day of Preparation, the 'ereb pēsah. "Noon" here means midday, since the fourth evangelist was almost certainly reckoning hours from daylight

rather than from midnight. Thus, the story time depicted between 19.16b and 19.42 is a period of approximately six hours (from about midday to just before nightfall). The narrative time of the passion account as a whole should be seen as a 24 hour period, beginning on Thursday evening and ending early Friday evening. This period coincided with the vigil of the Sabbath from 6pm Thursday until 6pm Friday⁷⁰.

The theological significance of JOHN's chronology here is not easy to assess. It has often been pointed out that the evangelist's dating of the crucifixion means that Jesus is crucified at the same time as the paschal lambs are being slaughtered in the temple precincts by the Jewish priests (between noon and nightfall, when the lambs would have to be ready for the Passover meals on that Friday evening). Since the hours of Jesus' execution extend from approximately midday to about 6pm on this same day, we can see some poignancy in this co-incidence of occurrences. Jesus has been referred to as "the lamb of God" in 1.29 (with which the end of chapter 19 may form a distant inclusio). There are also a number of possible paschal nuances in the language used to describe Jesus' crucifixion - for example, the "hyssop" stalk which the soldiers use to offer vinegar to Jesus (which mimics the use of the hyssop to sprinkle blood from the paschal lambs), and the fact that Jesus' legs were not broken (which is redolent of Exodus 12.46). In the light of these details, we suggest that narrative chronology is here inseparable from narrative Christology, that the importance of JOHN's narrative time derives from the fact that Jesus is implicitly depicted as the true Paschal lamb. The idea of the death of Christ as a paschal sacrifice is therefore one theme in this final section of JOHN's passion account⁷¹.

Along with this idea of Jesus as the true Paschal lamb, the fourth evangelist has selected, combined and expressed his passion material in order to bring together the Christological theme introduced in John 18.1-27, and the Christological theme introduced in John 18.28-19.16a. In section one of JOHN's passion account, the regulative idea is that of Jesus as the good shepherd who voluntarily lays down his life. As Reginald Fuller has put it, "the keynote of John's presentation of the passion is struck in 10.17-18, "I have power to lay it (my life) down, and I have power to take it again". Jesus initiates the passion and calls the shots"⁷². In John 18.1-27, the voluntariness of the shepherd's act of self-giving is time and again stressed by Jesus' control over events. Jesus is depicted as the one who has the power and the initiative to master his predicament, but instead chooses to allow himself to become the passive victim of the world's perverse animosity. In section three of the passion account (19.16bff), this is again emphasized in three details. First, Jesus carries his own cross to Golgotha, whilst Simon of Cyrene helps him in the synoptic versions. This physical feat reveals "the all-sufficiency of Jesus"⁷³ and the fact that he is "sole master of his destiny"⁷⁴. Secondly, in verses 25-29, Jesus is portrayed as one who has the power and control to complete the task he has been given, even whilst on the verge of death. Thirdly, in verse 30, Jesus is seen to bow his head at the moment of his death. Even here, Jesus is again the subject of an active verb, implying that he "deliberately chose the moment of his death by bowing his head, thus restricting his breathing, and causing life to become extinct"⁷⁵.

The pastoral theme of part one of JOHN's passion account is therefore brought to fruition in part three. But it is also true that the royal theme of part two of the same account (18.28-19.16a) is

fulfilled here. In part two, the principal, regulative christological theme is the notion of Jesus-as-king - ironically the very thing which the Jews use as the basis for his execution. As Brown writes, "Jesus is crowned and hailed as King during his trial, and enthroned and publicly proclaimed as King on the cross"⁷⁶. In John 19.16b-42, this royal Christology is dramatically fulfilled in three significant details. First, in v.18, the evangelist insists that Jesus is crucified in the centre, between two other victims, thereby signifying that Jesus has a place of royal honour. As Schnackenburg puts it, "even in the midst of this macabre scenery he is King"⁷⁷. Secondly, Pilate's superscription, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" (v.19), written in Hebrew, Latin and Greek, is seen by the evangelist as an ironic witness to Jesus' universal Kingship. The charge becomes "a world-wide proclamation of enthronement"⁷⁸. Thirdly, at the end of this third section (vv.38-42), Nicodemus brings a royal gift of an immense quantity of myrrh and aloes in order to embalm Jesus' body. This lavish quantity of myrrh and aloes (about 75lbs in weight), signifies that "in the evangelist's eyes, this is a regal burial, the burial of 'the King of the Jews'"⁷⁹. The same honour that is extended to the royal Christ-child in the nativity narratives is here extended to the dead king in JOHN⁸⁰. Thus, the two themes of Jesus-as-shepherd and Jesus-as-king are continued and fulfilled by six significant narrative details (three in both cases) in the emplotment of John 19.16b-42.

SYMBOLISM.

Commentators on the Johannine passion account have rarely been restrained in their symbolic readings of narrative details, and nowhere is this truer than in the context of John 19.16b-42. Four details have

encouraged a particularly vast and sometimes eccentric interpretative literature: the seamless robe in 19.23b, the role of Jesus' mother in 19.26, the stalk of hyssop in 19.29, and the effusion of blood and water in 19.34. Of these, by far the most important is the incident in 19.34, as can be seen from the disproportionate amount of narrative its description, attestation and interpretation requires (19.31-37, the longest smaller unit in section three). At the historical level, what we have here is a reminiscence of an incident in which a soldier probed Jesus' body in order to make sure that he was dead, especially since death appears to have been unusually premature. This puncturing of Jesus' body brings forth not only a stream of blood but also a quantity of water - the water possibly being a residue of hemorrhagic fluid from the pleural cavity released during the scourging²¹. As so often in JOHN, a detail in the life (or in this case the death) of Jesus becomes patient of a deeper, symbolic resonance. This brings us to the question of the symbolic meaning which the evangelist attaches to it. The insistent tone of 19.35, the eye-witness attestation and verification of the incident, makes it clear that the evangelist and his community regarded the matter as an awesome occurrence, perhaps even miraculous. But what symbolism did they see in the effusion, and can we penetrate that level of meaning?

A first possibility is that 19.34 provides us with a further piece of paschal symbolism. There may be some paschal significance in the apparently casual adverb "immediately" in 19.34. Since "one of the strict requirements of Jewish sacrificial law was that the blood of the victim should not be congealed but should flow forth at the moment of death so that it could be sprinkled²²", it is possible to understand the immediate effusion of blood as yet another indication that Christ is the

true Paschal lamb here. A second possibility, advanced by Augustine, is that the blood and the water are symbols of the two Sacraments, Eucharist and Baptism, and that the incident symbolizes the birth of the Church. Just as Eve was created out of Adam's side, so here the Church, the New Eve, is created from the side of Christ, the New Adam²³. A third possibility is that the effusion, along with the handing over the spirit, was intended to point to the real humanity of Jesus. I John 5.7 reads: "There are three witnesses, the Spirit, the water and the blood, and all three give the same testimony", i.e. that Jesus really was a human being. The spirit quitted Jesus at death (19.30). This meant that only the emission of blood and water would prove Jesus Christ's true humanness, that he really was the Word EN SARKĒ. The wonder of the incident derived from its concrete rebuttal of "the Docetic conception that the human body of Jesus was a phantom"²⁴.

All three of these possibilities are plausible. However, each one requires ideas which are properly speaking extrinsic to the gospel for their justification. As so often in JOHN, the symbolic explanations of concrete narrative details are usually provided within the gospel itself, so that the real question at issue is this: what significance does the evangelist give to blood and water elsewhere? The blood of Jesus in 6.53 is quite clearly a life-giving property. Jesus says, "if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you". Very significantly, water is given the same life-giving property in connection with Jesus' body at 7.38-9. Jesus here quotes a Scripture which may refer to himself and to his death: "As the Scripture says, 'From him shall flow rivers of living water'"²⁵. The wonder of the incident in 19.34 therefore consists of the paradoxical association of life-giving properties with a dead man's body. Origen expressed the

beauty of this paradox as follows: "even in death, Jesus manifested signs of life in the water and the blood, and was, so to speak, a NEW dead man"²⁶. Barrett writes: "it is highly probable that in the effusion of blood and water from the pierced side of Christ John saw a symbol of the fact that from the Crucified there proceed those living streams by which men are quickened and the Church lives"²⁷. Thus, even though an allusion to the Sacraments is by no means impossible, the primary significance of this incident is that, "no sooner is Jesus' sacrifice complete than the flow of life for the world begins"²⁸.

CONCLUSION.

The artistry of JOHN is plainly visible in this narrative construction of Jesus' death and burial, and especially in his pervasive and highly sophisticated use of irony. We have not devoted a separate section on irony for two reasons: first because it is a device which is so fully integrated into the narrative superstructure that we have found ourselves examining it in the context of characterization, structure, emplotment, time, themes and so on; secondly, because any comments on Johannine irony would, in any case, be little more than footnotes to the excellent literary studies done by Wead, Culpepper, O'Day and - particularly - Paul Duke. However, in John 19.16b-42, irony plays a vital part in the shaping of the reader's response to the crucial subject of the death of Jesus, so some passing remarks must be made.

Irony itself is an oppositional structure which thrives on two orders of meaning contrasting with one another. For a word, a phrase or a sentence to be ironic, it must be possible to imagine someone or some group interpreting something superficially and missing completely the deeper dimension of truth. Defined this way, we can see that irony

permeates the narrative world which the evangelist portrays in 19.16bff. For example, when the soldiers crucify Jesus in the middle of two other victims, they are unaware that they are testifying to Jesus' sovereignty. When Pilate puts the royal titulus above Jesus' cross, he is unaware that he is testifying to Jesus' universal kingship. When the soldiers agree not to tear Jesus' garments, they are unaware that their restraint is a fulfilment of prophecy, and so on. At every opportunity, the narrator subtly insinuates the reader into the superior position of understanding meanings which are missed by characters within the narrative world itself. The narrator's post-resurrectional view-point leads the reader into UNDERSTANDING where his characters MISUNDERSTAND. As such, he nudges and guides the reader into a faithful and responsible interpretation of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God - the very task he sets himself in 20.31. All the narrative strategies we have examined in this chapter - including irony - are subservient to the evangelist's Christology. Every narrative technique is employed with the rhetorical purpose of persuasion in mind. Truly, John 18-19 deserves the title, "narrative Christology".

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE.

1. B.Lindars, THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, p.535. Lindars' comment is right. Everything in JOHN has been building up to the moment of Christ's passion - which is the major reason for rejecting Käsemann's curious view that John 18-19 is an unnecessary appendage.
2. P.Ellis, THE GENIUS OF JOHN, p.247.
3. The main reason I have for believing that the evangelist intended a contrast between Jesus' "ego eimi" and Peter's "ouk eimi" is the fact that he only has two of Peter's denials in direct speech when he could have presented all three in direct speech. This suggests conscious dramatic artistry on the evangelist's part. He has deliberately confined himself to two uses of "ouk eimi" because he has only two uses of "ego eimi" on the lips of Jesus in 18.1-11. It may also be that the second "ego eimi" in 18.8, which has always struck me as being redundant in that narrative, is included so as to heighten this contrast with Peter.
4. R.H.Strachan, THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.306.
5. Ibid, p.306 (Bernard's comment is quoted in Strachan).
6. R.Schnackenburg, THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST.JOHN, VOL.III, p.223.
7. E.Haenchen, JOHN, VOL.II, p.165.
8. R.H.Strachan, Ibid, p.306.
9. Ibid, p.307.
10. Though, of course, if the beloved disciple was Lazarus and the founding figure of the Johannine community, he would not have been relatively unknown. Even so, the irony might still exist because the community might well have seen the BD's anonymity as an ironic gesture on the part of the evangelist. "There goes Peter, representative of the Galilean Twelve, but he needs our founding father to help him - and he's not revered at all in the Apostolic churches !"
11. E.Haenchen makes a similar point in his commentary on this passage: "this designation comports poorly with the position of someone known to the high priest" (p.167 - the designation being "the beloved disciple").
12. P.Duke, IRONY IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.97.
13. G.Theissen, MIRACLE STORIES IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN TRADITION, Edinburgh, T & T.Clark, 1983, p.7.
14. "Tou cheimarrou tou Kedron" literally means "winter-flowing Kidron" (Brown, JOHN, VOL.II, p.806). Marsh writes that the word "Kidron" may well mean "dark" (SAINT JOHN, p.585). If that is correct, then the two ideas of winter/coldness and darkness are suggested by the topography right at the start of this narrative. The adjective "winter-flowing" is particularly significant because the season of winter symbolizes "the climate of

antipathy surrounding Jesus in John" (Bruns, THE USE OF TIME IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.288.).

15. Hoskyns wrote: "this heterogenous force united in opposition to Jesus is unable to recognize, still less to grasp, Him who is the Light of the World, though they are provided with lights (a Johannine addition) and weapons. The circumstances of the arrest form an unconscious comment on 1.5" (THE FOURTH GOSPEL: p.605). See also Marsh, SAINT JOHN, p.585, who speaks of "the futility of any man looking for him who is the light of the world with a mere lantern". So there is an ironic, implicit commentary on the theme of light. There is also an ironic, implicit commentary on the related theme of warmth. I find the conative, present participle "thermainomenos" very poignant in 18.18. Peter stands with those who were "trying to warm themselves" by the fire. He stands out in the dark and the cold, far away from the true source of light and warmth.

16. J.Painter, JOHN 9 AND THE INTERPRETATION OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.47.

17. C.K.Barrett, THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST.JOHN, p.435.

18. B.Lindars, Ibid, p.542.

19. Ibid, p.542: "John cannot allow that the Good Shepherd could be so careless".

20. J.D.F.Derrett's THE GOOD SHEPHERD: ST.JOHN'S USE OF JEWISH HALAKAH AND HAGGADAH (Studia Theologica 27, 1973, pp.25-50) provides a useful introduction to the complexities of the Good Shepherd discourse.

21. This structural division is presented in M.J.J Menken's NUMERICAL LITERARY TECHNIQUE IN JOHN, p.213.

22. R.Schnackenburg, THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST.JOHN, VOL.II, p.283.

23. J.Lightfoot, JOHN, p.210.

24. R.Schnackenburg, Ibid, p.283.

25. R.E.Brown, THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN, VOL.I, p.385.

26. R.Schnackenburg, Ibid, p.279.

27. Brown correctly points out that the verb "entered" in 18.1 "evokes the image of an enclosed area" (JOHN, VOL.II, p.807). Marsh makes the same point in his SAINT JOHN (p.585), as does Barrett: the verbs "enter" and "exit" "suggest a walled enclosure" (JOHN.p.432).

28. The language of going in and coming out seems utterly redundant unless it is supposed to pick up narrative echoes with the going in and coming out of the shepherd in ch.10.

29. C.H.Dodd, ABOUT THE GOSPELS, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1950. p.41.

30. W. Iser, THE ACT OF READING, Baltimore, John Hopkins University, 1978. p.186.
31. R.H.Strachan, *ibid*, p.315.
32. R.E.Brown, THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN, VOL.II, p.858.
33. *Ibid*, p.866.
34. R.Schnackenburg, THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST.JOHN, VOL.III, p.244.
35. R.H.Strachan, *ibid*, p.314.
36. R.Schnackenburg, *ibid*, p.251.
37. M.Appold, THE ONENESS MOTIF IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.130.
38. C.K.Barrett, *ibid*, p.448.
39. M.Dods, THE GOSPEL OF JOHN. p.306.
40. R.Schnackenburg, *ibid*, p.252.
41. R.Bultmann, THE GOSPEL OF JOHN: A COMMENTARY, p.658.
42. *Ibid*, p.658.
43. E.Haenchen, *ibid*, p.180.
44. M.Dods, *ibid*, p.307.
45. R.Bultmann, *ibid*, p.658.
46. *Ibid*, p.661. R.Schnackenburg writes that "it is the numinous terror before the divine which falls upon this representative of earthly power" (p.260).
47. J.Marsh, *ibid*, p.608.
48. B.Lindars, *ibid*, p.568. The $\mu\epsilon$ here is certainly emphatic and draws attention to Pilate's arrogance.
49. R.Bultmann, *ibid*, p.663.
50. A.Culpepper, ANATOMY, p.143.
51. R.E.Brown, *ibid*, p.864.
52. D.Jasper, THE NEW TESTAMENT AND THE LITERARY IMAGINATION, p.45.
53. *Ibid*, p.46.
54. *Ibid*, p.46.

55. U.C. Von Vahlde, THE JOHANNINE 'JEWS'. p.35.
56. Ibid, p.35.
57. A.Culpepper, ANATOMY, p.129.
58. Ibid, p.129.
59. Ibid, p.124.
60. Severino Pancaro writes that at this moment, "Judaism dissociates itself from Israel" (THE LAW IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.299).
61. E.Hoskyns, ibid, p.613.
62. There has been much discussion over whether "kathizein" should be understood transitively or intransitively here. See the discussion in Brown (vol.II) pp.880-1. In this thesis, I am opting for the view that this is yet another example of the Johannine use of double entendre.
63. M.Appold, THE ONENESS MOTIF IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.131.
64. P.Duke, IRONY IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.129.
65. C.K.Barrett, ibid, p.443.
66. C.H.Giblin, JOHN'S NARRATION OF THE HEARING BEFORE PILATE, p.221.
67. R.E.Brown, ibid, pp.910-11.
68. E.C.Hoskyns: the four women are "the faithful counterpart of the four unbelieving soldiers" (ibid, p.631). See also Barrett, ibid, p.458 and R.Schnackenburg, ibid, p.273.
69. R.E.Brown, ibid, p.844.
70. Ibid, p.933.
71. J.K.Howard, PASSOVER AND EUCHARIST IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.337.
72. R.Fuller, THE PASSION, DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS ACCORDING TO ST.JOHN, p.57.
73. C.K.Barrett, ibid. p.456.
74. R.E.Brown, ibid, p.917.
75. J.Marsh, ibid, p.618.
76. R.E.Brown, ibid, p.960.
77. R.Schnackenburg, ibid, pp.270-1. See also Hoskyns (p.628): "his royal dignity was attested by the central position of His cross, and published by the superscription".

78. R.E.Brown, *ibid*, p.919.

79. R.H.Strachan, *ibid*, p.323.

80. In both the infancy narrative of Matthew and the burial narrative of John we have "wise" men bearing gifts (including myrrh in both narratives) to a King in a nocturnal, pastoral setting. Whether or not this is conscious irony on the fourth evangelist's part is impossible to say with any certainty. This narrative echo only makes sense if we treat the four gospels as a unified story. To justify it in terms of literary dependence on Matthew by John would require some eccentric and tortuous source criticism.

81. R.E.Brown, *ibid*, p.947.

82. *Ibid*, p.951.

83. *Ibid*, p.949.

84. Although not much of first century Docetism is known with any great degree of certainty, there may have been an anti-Docetic motive behind this emphasis on the real humanity and the real death of Jesus Christ.

85. Though this involves taking the minority view that the "him" referred to in 7.38-9 is Jesus and not the believer.

86. Quoted in Hoskyns, *ibid*, p.636.

87. C.K.Barrett, *ibid*, p.463.

88. B.Lindars, *ibid*, p.586.

CHAPTER SIX. JOHN 18-19 AS NARRATIVE PERFORMANCE.

SECTION ONE. A PARADIGM OF TRAGIC STORY.

In chapter two of this thesis we set ourselves three major tasks: (1) to explain the existence and the nature of permanent narrative structures; (2) to introduce the reader to a new method of gospel research, namely the structural analysis of gospel narrative; and (3) to assess the applicability of this approach in the context of the gospel of John. The main thrust of the chapter was that structural analysis of narrative makes a distinction between narrative as a specific historical performance and narrative as an achronic system. For example, John 18-19 as a solitary passion narrative is one particular manifestation in space and time of a structure of possibilities which exists, seemingly, beyond space and time. Just as a written sentence is an individual utterance (performance) which must obey the rules of a grammatical structure which is complete at any given time (competence), so John 18-19 is an individual performance which obeys the grammatical rules for narratives of a certain genre. In chapter two, we saw that it was the work of Vladimir Propp on Russian fairy tales which first introduced this kind of narrative analysis. After examining one hundred fairy tales, Propp tried to find the overarching scheme, the system of laws, which embraced all stories of this kind, and he eventually discovered it in a number of invariable functions and characters. In the present chapter, our aim is to discover the permanent narrative structure of which John 18-19 is a performance in order to assess better its impact on the reader *as narrative Christology*.

In the light of these remarks, it becomes evident that the two key questions to answer right at the outset of any structural analysis of John 18-19 are the following: first, what is a narrative *paradigm*?

and secondly, which narrative paradigm lies behind John 18-19 ? Doty has defined a paradigm as "the speculative or analytical reconstruction of the pattern underlying a performance" ("performance" meaning "the effective use of language in concrete situations")'. An example of "paradigmatic" analysis of narrative was provided in chapter two, when we described George Nicklesburg's approach to MARK's passion narrative. His approach depended on an accurate "syntagmatic" analysis of the text. That is to say, it depended on a step-by-step analysis of each "narreme" (narrative unit) in Mark 15-16, and a description of each narreme with a particular event label. The labels he ended up with were INTRODUCTION, PROVOCATION, CONSPIRACY, DECISION, TRUST, OBEDIENCE, ACCUSATION, TRIAL, CONDEMNATION, and so on. Nicklesburg's subsequent argument was that these plot functions are precisely those which can be abstracted from a particular generic model, namely the stories of persecution and vindication in Jewish literature. All such stories are characterised by the common theme of the rescue and vindication of a persecuted innocent person or persons, and each one is emplotted by means of a limited number of narrative functions. The same paradigm, Nicklesburg proposed, lies behind Mark 15-16, for the same pattern lies behind this performance as lies behind all other performances of this genre.

The division and connection between "syntagmatic" analysis and "paradigmatic" analysis - the one concerned with the surface of a story, the other concerned with the deep structure behind it - is central to the structuralist enterprise. Tzvetan Todorov describes these two facets of structuralist criticism as follows: the first syntagmatic approach is an exegetical and interpretative exercise, and involves a redescription of the meaning of the text ("meaning" understood as the inner relations of part to part and of part to whole); the second, paradigmatic approach

involves reconstructing the abstract structure of which the individual narrative is a manifestation. The first approach is particular, the second is general. The first requires *redescription*, the second requires *reconstruction*. The first involves precise analysis, exegesis and naming, the second involves "the establishment of general laws of which this particular text is a product"², and so we could go on. Of the paradigmatic orientation of this undertaking, Todorov writes that the goal is to discover the laws that are external to a narrative and which concern the psyche, or society, or even the human mind itself. The goal is "to propose a theory of the structure and the functioning of literary discourse, a theory that affords a list of literary possibilities, so that existing literary works appear as achieved particular cases"³. By considering this dimension, literary and narrative criticism reintroduce science into the business of interpretation, since the "natural laws" of narrative, as it were, are discerned.

It should be clear by now that there is some logic in having a chapter on the paradigmatic aspect of John 18-19 immediately after a chapter devoted to its syntagmatic, narrative dynamics (chapter 5). Put very crudely, chapter 6 is to chapter 5 what paradigmatic reconstruction is to syntagmatic redescription. This brings us to the all-important question of the "paradigm" behind John 18-19 and to the nature of the same text as a narrative performance of this paradigm. From what we have said so far, it is evident that the "paradigm" behind John 18-19 is a speculative reconstruction or abstraction from the narrative's characters, plot components and themes. This is because, as Daniel and Aline Patte wrote of Mark's passion narrative, "the study of the narrative manifestation (the referential-denotative meaning of the story) will enable us to deduce the narrative system of the text"⁴. In

the last chapter, we gave close attention to the business of the exegesis and interpretation of John 18-19, and we arrived at a particular understanding of John's story of the death of Jesus. We gave the following event labels to the narrative as a whole: THE ARREST OF THE SHEPHERD (18.1-27), THE TRIAL OF THE KING (18.28-19.16a), THE SLAUGHTER OF THE LAMB (19.16b-42). The dominant theme in the passion narrative seems to us to be "the killing of the king". The paschal overtones in 19.16bff, along with the narrative echoes in 18.1ff of the Good Shepherd discourse (with its notion of "laying down one's life"), suggest that this is no ordinary death. Indeed, they indicate that there is a sacrificial and indeed expiatory dimension to the "killing"⁵. Furthermore, phrases like EGO EIMI in 18.5 reveal that this man is no ordinary king either. Indeed, they show that he is in some sense or another "divine". Thus, the fundamental story of John 18-19 is best summed up as "the expiatory sacrifice of a divine king"...

There are two additional points to make about the Johannine story of the death of Jesus. First, the death of Jesus in JOHN is the death of an innocent man at the hands of his own fellow countrymen. The Jews in JOHN are supposed to be Jesus' own family in a metaphorical sense. They are supposed to be the children of God, sharing the same Father as Jesus (though not in the same unique relationship). Yet in John 18-19, these members of Jesus' own spiritual family are the very people who forsake their moral integrity and their religious heritage in order to put an innocent brother to death. As we saw in the last chapter, the Jews in JOHN are defined not only by their perverse hostility, but also by their connection with evil in the gospel (see 8.44). In JOHN they are even prepared to replace the kingship of Yahweh with the kingship of Caesar (19.15) in order to put this innocent man to

death. That Pilate is deeply disturbed by this apparently irrational blood-lust is clear from his threefold protestation of Jesus' innocence. The *ego gar oun euriskō en auto aitian* formula rings out three times in the trial narrative, at 18.38, 19.4 and 19.6. So a first additional point to underline is the innocence of the king who is "sacrificed".

Secondly, John's story of the passion presents Jesus' death as the moment of departure and return to the glory of the Father (13.1). That this return is a glorious phenomenon is suggested throughout JOHN by the recurrent use of the verbs "to lift up" and "to glorify" in connection with Jesus' death. The verb "lift up" contains the double meaning of "exaltation" as well as crucifixion, and the verb "glorify", means "to bring to a position of honour and clothe with splendour"⁶. Thus, the death of Jesus is a revelatory act since it is the moment in which Jesus is seen for who he really is (8.28), because it is the moment when he is exalted to the glory of the Father. However, it is important to note that this notion of Jesus' death as exaltation, glorification and revelation is one which is introduced and repeated in the rest of the gospel, but it is not overtly present in the passion account. Nowhere in John 18-19 are there uses of the verb "to lift up" or "to glorify", and this should caution us from minimalizing Jesus' sufferings. JOHN's story of the passion may not present us with a king who suffers the agony and distress of dereliction, but he does present us with a Christ who is slapped (18.22), subjected to the rabid hostility of the Jews, mockery and torture (19.1ff), to carrying his own cross (19.17), to dying in front of his mother (19.25), and to dehydration (19.28). JOHN's emphasis may be different from MARK's (the former depicts a suffering king, the latter presents a kingly sufferer), but suffering is still a reality in JOHN.

The story which JOHN depicts in the passion narrative is therefore the story of the arrest, trial, torture, execution and burial of a divine king - a king whose mission is to be rejected by his own spiritual family and to give his life as a redemptive sacrifice for his true family (the disciples). What are the generic influences upon the fourth evangelist's formation of his passion narrative ? Put another way, what is the story-paradigm which most influenced the evangelist's shaping of his historical tradition of the passion ? A number of scholars throughout the present century have suggested that the kind of story to which John 18-19 (and indeed JOHN as a whole) most closely corresponds is *tragic story*. In 1925 Strachan wrote that "the ominous note of tragedy is struck in the Prologue (1.1-18) itself, 'He came unto his own, and his own received him not'"⁷. In 1927, F.R. Hitchcock argued that JOHN is "a tragedy, real, intense, progressive"⁸. In 1930, Clayton Bowen wrote that the fourth gospel is not really narrative at all, but a form of drama close to Greek tragedy⁹. In 1937, F.Pfister discovered some interesting parallels between the pseudo-Senecan tragedy, *HERCULES OETAEUS* and JOHN'¹⁰. In 1948 Milo Connick suggested "the aim of the author of the Fourth Gospel ... was wholly consonant with that of a dramatist" even though the gospel was obviously not written for the theatre'¹¹. In 1978, Stephen Smalley proposed that JOHN is "a highly-wrought drama"¹². In 1982 W.R.Doomeris proposed that the evangelist "fashioned his Gospel after the model of the Greek dramas and particularly the Tragedies"¹³.

Given this persistent comparison between the gospel of John and tragedy, we are forced into asking what constitutes a tragic story, or, to quote Nathan Scott, what constitutes "the central story, the essential myth or fable, that underlies those great actions that most

fully exemplify the tragic genre ?"¹⁴ Definitions of tragedy are numerous. Aristotle regarded tragedy as a story of the change of a hero's fortunes from happiness to misery. Diomedes regarded tragedy as "a narrative of the fortunes of semi-divine characters in adversity". Isidore of Seville saw tragic stories as "sad stories of commonwealths and kings". Chaucer thought of tragedy as a story of someone "in greet prosperitee" who falls "out of heigh degree/ Into miserie", and so we might go on¹⁵. One thing is certain however; that tragedy is not simply "anything that is bad or unfortunate, however deeply it may tear at our hearts"¹⁶ (the celebrated "toothache" view of tragedy). Tragic story originally derives from myths of dying gods, as Northrop Frye points out. He writes that "tragic stories, when they apply to divine beings, may be called Dionysiac. These are stories of dying gods, like Hercules with his poisoned shirt and his pyre, Orpheus torn to pieces by the Bacchantes, Balder murdered by the treachery of Loki, Christ dying on the cross"¹⁷. Tragedy begins, then, with the fall and exclusion of a divine leader so that a particular social group can reestablish a sense of communal identity and order. Tragedy begins, as Weisinger has shown, with the killing of the God-King¹⁸.

The essential story of tragedy derives from these mythical and ritualistic origins and develops into a story with a recognizable pattern. Richard Holloway describes this pattern as follows: over the course of the whole story, a protagonist is taken from being "the cynosure of society to being estranged from it"¹⁹. This same protagonist undergoes a process of increasing alienation, "to a point at which what happens to him suggests the expulsion of a scape-goat, or the sacrifice of a victim, or both"²⁰. In outline, tragedy is a story that "depicts a movement from prosperity to catastrophe"²¹. As Leland Ryken proposes,

tragic stories traditionally focus on a protagonist of high moral and social standing. He is "usually a king, is greater than common humanity, but subject to the natural order and to moral criticism". He has "representative status" and "possesses something that can be called a greatness of spirit"²². Sometimes the fall which this character undergoes is the result of an error of judgement on his part, as when King Lear miscalculates the fidelity and affection his three daughters have for him. Sometimes the fall is brought about through some accident of fate, or some impenetrable divine purpose, as when Oedipus murders his father and marries his mother without realizing who they are. Sometimes the fall is brought about through the error of a whole social group, resulting in the unjust punishment of an innocent hero. Whatever the cause, the result is a degree of suffering which is terrifyingly extreme and pitiful to behold.

It seems, then, that even though there is an element of variation in the cause of a tragic protagonist's suffering, there is an essential invariability in the general pattern of each tragic story. Kenneth Burke has described the central moments in "the dialectic of tragedy" as POEIMA, PATHEMA and MATHEMA (the act, the sufferance or state, the thing learned). As Burke puts it, "we can discern something of the 'tragic' grammar behind the Greek proverb's way of saying "one learns by experience"; 'ta pathemata mathemata", the suffered is the learned"²³. In tragedy, an act engenders opposition ("brings to the fore whatever factors resist or modify the act"), which an agent then suffers, "and as he learns to take the oppositional motives into account, widening his terminology accordingly, he has arrived at a higher degree of understanding"²⁴. The only problem with Burke's grammar of tragic motives is that the mathema, the thing learned, is not

necessarily learned by the protagonist. If his social or familial group is responsible for the error which leads to his catastrophe, then it may be they who learn, not the dead scapegoat. This problem aside, we shall be working with Fergusson's translation of Burke's categories in this thesis. Fergusson works with the following labels: PURPOSE (e.g. Oedipus' desire to find Laius' killer), PASSION (the suffering that results from Oedipus' purpose) and PERCEPTION (the new understanding of the mystery of the human situation which emerges from Oedipus' experiences)²⁵. We shall apply these to JOHN in section two.

The paradigmatic tragic story - what Richard Lattimore would call the invariable story-pattern of tragedy²⁶ - is thus an inexorable movement from a specific purpose to an extreme experience of suffering to a new perception, either by the protagonist, or by his social group, or by the reader/spectator. Aristotle's grammar of tragic story conceives the classic tragedy (the 'ideal plot') as one which takes place within a family, as when a man dies at the hands of his father. These tragic incidents within family ties ("philiai") form the "indispensable 'part' of the tragic plot, according to Else, and help us to understand the true nature of "hamartia" (traditionally understood by scholars as a kind of tragic flaw directly responsible for a hero's downfall). Else regards hamartia as a concept directly linked to AGNOIA (ignorance) and ANAGNORISIS (recognition) in Aristotle. Ignorance is internal to a family. That is to say, within a familial group, some lack of recognition leads to a catastrophe, as when Oedipus fails to recognize his father. HAMARTIA therefore, again in Else's understanding of Aristotle, denotes the ignorance of the identity of a kinsman or near relative. The paradigmatic tragic situation is generated when a hero is not recognized for who or what he really is, or when a hero fails to

recognize someone or something else for what they really are. The ANAGNORISIS or recognition occurs when it is too late, as when Lear learns how much Cordelia really did love him, and how much Goneril and Regan really despised and mocked him²⁷.

The picture of the paradigmatic tragic story which develops out of this summary is one of a tragic protagonist (originally a king and/or a god), who undergoes an extreme transition from prominence to disaster (the PERIPATEIA or "change in fortune") through some HAMARTIA or AGNOIA (failure of recognition/ignorance, either on his part or by those around him). This leads to a situation of intense suffering (the PATHOS), and results in the expulsion or death of the protagonist, either preceded by or followed by a recognition (ANAGNORISIS), either by the hero, his familial group, or the reader. The factor which gives this story its "followability" and inevitability is the sense of fate or of divine necessity which nearly always pervades the narrative world of a tragedy. It is the sense that the catastrophe is in some way irrevocably foreordained that lends momentum and directionality to the progress from PURPOSE to PASSION to PERCEPTION. Humphreys has suggested that tragic stories are subtle artistic explorations into the relationship between human (ir)responsibility and inexorable fate in human affairs. For Humphreys, the essence of the tragic vision is this dialectical relationship between flaw and fate which leads to pitiable and terrifying catastrophes. The extremity of the tragic situation derives from the paradox that the catastrophe which arises from a collision with the universe's moral order is at the same time fated by that supernatural order, even though some element of human error has been necessary for that fate to be fulfilled²⁸.

The invariable functions of the paradigmatic tragic story therefore seem to be the following: (1) (a) the introduction of a protagonist of exceptional standing, sometimes a king, sometimes a semi-divine being (Hercules), sometimes even a god (Prometheus); (b) the introduction of a PURPOSE; (2) (a) a peripeteia, or a change in fortune, in which the protagonist comes into dissonant collision with the family, society or cosmos which had seemed initially neutral or even cooperative; (b) a PASSION, that is, a catastrophe resulting from some hamartia/agnia (in Aristotle, this "passion" is called the PATHOS, usually characterised by an estrangement, humiliation and murder on the part of the protagonist's family, society or cosmos); (3) a PERCEPTION, a new understanding of the moral order, of humanity or of society resulting from the extremity of the protagonist's sufferings. These aspects (PURPOSE/ PASSION/ PERCEPTION) constitute "the conceptual system underlying the creation and appreciation of individual, existing tragedies"²⁹. They constitute the "kernel plot sentence", the transcendent grammar, the ideal plot of tragedy³⁰. In a sense, such an abstraction is inevitably an over-simplification because each manifestation of this paradigm has its own individuality as well as a grammatical conformity to its system. However, it will serve for the time being as an outline of the achronic system of which each tragic story, including John 18-19, is a performance or "incarnation".

CHAPTER SIX.
SECTION TWO. JOHN 18-19 AS TRAGIC STORY.

Before we turn to our analysis of John 18-19 as tragic performance, we need to correct four common misconceptions that hinder an appreciation of the tragic vision in JOHN. The first misconception which people hold is that Christianity is fundamentally incompatible with the tragic vision because it embraces the ultimate hope of a "happy ending" (a characteristic of comedy). I.A. Richards has argued that "tragedy is only possible to a mind which is for the moment agnostic or Manichean" because "the least touch of any theology which has a compensating Heaven to offer the tragic hero is fatal"³¹. However, it is much too simplistic to claim that a system of belief which regards suffering as redemptive and as a prelude to glory, precludes a cathartic spectacle of human misery. The not yet character of the Kingdom of God is characterised by an eschatological tension in which extreme Christian suffering is very much a reality (witness Paul's catalogue of hardships in 2 Corinthians 11). Furthermore, a tragedy is not tragic just because it ends in hopeless deprivation and total loss. Oedipus at Colonus, for example, ends on a highly positive, hopeful and redemptive note (as does PHILOCTETES, ALCESTIS, etc). In fact, tragedy actually requires an element of redemption so that a new knowledge (anagnorisis) of the human condition can be acquired. Thus the tragic vision and the Christian faith need not be regarded as incompatible.

A second misconception that might hinder a tragic reading of the Johannine passion account is expressed as follows: "tragedy is a Greek phenomenon, how then can it be a characteristic of the Hebrew Bible and of a Jewish Gospel like JOHN?" A quick answer is that the gospel of JOHN is not a pure Jewish work exempt from hellenistic qualities and

concerns. It is eminently possible to OVER-emphasize the Jewishness of JOHN and to overlook the fact that the same gospel employs "hellenistic techniques" to treat "themes of primarily Jewish concern" (for example, "the ironic techniques of the Fourth Gospel are far more akin to the techniques of Greek drama"³²). A more adequate answer, however, is that tragic stories are not the exclusive property of hellenistic culture. A number of scholars have seen a very close correspondence between the tragic vision and the Hebrew tradition, most recently in the case of I Samuel 9-31³³. The story of Saul has been read as a terrifying transition from fame and royal prosperity to a desperate "tragic isolation", and his suicide as a tragic attempt to wrench meaning from his destiny (comparable to the self-blinding of Oedipus). Saul begins the narrative at the height of his royal fortunes, but by the end of the tale his imposing stature has all but disappeared. The people of Israel's mistaken desire for a king, which is regarded by Yahweh as an undermining of His own kingship, is the HAMARTIA which renders Saul's fate so inexorable. Thus, in the story of Saul there is certainly PURPOSE/ PASSION and PERCEPTION.

A third misconception that might hinder an interpretation of JOHN as tragic is the view that tragedy is always and only to be found in the medium of drama. If this view was correct, it would of course prevent us from reading John 18-19 as tragic since JOHN's passion account is *narrative*. Some scholars have sought to prove that JOHN is in fact a drama not a narrative in order to justify such an interpretation. Perhaps the most overt declaration of this position is Clayton Bowen's awkward comment that "in no sense is the Fourth Gospel in form a narrative at all"³⁴, but rather a sequence of "dramatic scenes". However, there is a fundamental difference between narrative and drama,

as Scholes and Kellog have demonstrated. A narrative is identifiable by virtue of "the presence of a story and a story-teller" whilst a drama is "a story without a story-teller; in it characters act out directly what Aristotle called an 'imitation' of such action we find in life"³⁵. Since JOHN is narrative in form, this somewhat negates the arguments of men like Clayton Bowen that it is dramatic tragedy. In reality, however, there was never any need to pretend that JOHN was drama in order to prove its tragic character. Tragedy is not confined to drama but is a *kind of story* which is found in many different works, from the plays of Aeschylus to the novels of Malcolm Lowry. As Humphreys puts it, "the tragic vision can inform to a greater or lesser degree a wide range of literary genres"³⁶, including Hebrew narrative and NT gospels.

A final misconception is the belief that JOHN's portrait of the death of Jesus is one in which suffering and humiliation are absent. Nicholson has written that "the Johannine Passion Narrative is presented in terms of victory and glory"³⁷. Forestell has said that "in the fourth gospel the passion of Jesus is never referred to as something humiliating or degrading"³⁸. Both these remarks are overstatements. There is no doubt that in the narrative prior to John 18-19 the death of Jesus is interpreted as an elevation (3.14/8.28/12.32), a glorification (12.23/13.31/17.1,5), a return or ascent to the Father (13.1-3/14.3,28/16.10,28/3.13/6.62/20.17). In the Johannine passion narrative itself, however, it is not true to say that "the evangelist avoids portraying Jesus in a humiliating light at the supreme moment of his career"³⁹, for we have already shown in the last chapter that humiliation and suffering are present in Jesus' last moments. Forestell himself seems to recognize this when, after arguing that there is nothing humiliating about Jesus' passion, he describes Jesus in 19.5 as

an "abject and humiliated figure"!⁴⁰ Perhaps this notion of the lack of suffering in John 18-19 is based too much on a comparison with Mark 15-16, and not enough on a reading of John 18-19 in *its own right*.

Aristotle regarded the typical PATHOS as "a harmful or painful experience, such as deaths in public", "by brother on brother, or son on father" and so on⁴¹ (i.e. "within the bonds of family ties"). As we shall see in a moment, this is precisely the kind of picture given in John 18-19.

The grounds for denying any possibility that a Christian narrative like JOHN could be tragic are therefore unconvincing, and indeed the stubborn prevalence of interpretations of JOHN as tragedy is good evidence that there is something intrinsically tragic in the text itself. Two kinds of approach have hitherto been characteristic of what we might generously describe as the *John-as-tragedy school*. There is first of all the comparative approach of F. Pfister, who detected interesting parallels between the JOHN and the HERCULES OETAeus⁴². Martin Hengel has developed Pfister's thesis, pointing out that in the HERCULES the protagonist is frequently called "soter" (Saviour) and addresses Zeus as "pater" (Father). Hengel sees specific parallels between the glorious passion and death of Hercules in the Oetaeus and the passion and death of Jesus in JOHN. Amongst the Johannine-sounding statements of the dying Hercules are the following: "See now my Father calls me and opens the skies. Father I come...." (ll.1725ff). "The whole crowd stands in speechless wonder, scarcely able to believe the flames, so calm the brow, so majestic the hero" (ll.1745ff). "Whatever in me was mortal and of you has felt the flames and been vanquished: my Father's part has been given to heaven, yours to the flames" (ll.1966ff)⁴³. Of course, the similarities between the two texts is only very slight, and

no literary interdependence is likely. But one significant point emerges from the comparison, that a tragedy can depict a glorious, superhuman and majestic death and still remain a tragedy.

The second approach is closer to our structuralist method described in the previous section in that it maps JOHN against the ideal tragic plot proposed by Aristotle. Hitchcock's essay, *IS THE FOURTH GOSPEL A DRAMA?* (1923) (a development upon an essay written in 1907⁴⁴), was a ground-breaking study in this regard. Hitchcock's argument is that the fourth evangelist closely follows "the canons of Aristotle"⁴⁵. Like a tragedy, JOHN has a complete and unified plot with a beginning, a middle and an end. The beginning is the ideal beginning of the Word (John 1.1). The middle or complication (DEISIS) is the raising of Lazarus and the reaction it evokes. The end or dénouement (LUSIS) is "the Resurrection and the pronouncement of Thomas"⁴⁶. Like a Greek tragedy, JOHN "has five divisions with prologue and epilogue"⁴⁷: Act One = 1.19-2.12. Act Two = 2.13-6.71. Act Three = 7.1-11.57. Act Four = 12.1-19.42. Act Five = 20.1-31. The LUSIS or dénouement is begun in 18.1 with the arrest of Jesus. The attempted ANAGNORISIS or discovery of Jesus occurs more than once; it is begun by the soldiers (18.4), continued by Pilate (18.28ff) and achieved by Thomas (20.28). The PERIPETEIA or reversal in fortune occurs throughout these scenes but particularly when the Jews reject Jesus in favour of Barabbas. The PATHOS or scene of suffering is obviously the crucifixion in 19.16ff and the final ANAGNORISIS is Thomas' climactic confession in 20.28. As Hitchcock concludes, "every occurrence contributes to the advance of the drama; at every step the tragedy grows to climax"⁴⁸.

Our paradigmatic approach to the tragic vision of the fourth evangelist is different from either of these comparative or proto-

structuralist methods. In the present study we are concerned to show that the Johannine passion narrative exhibits and, to a degree, subverts the tragic vision which we have described in the previous section. In making this claim, we are not contending that the evangelist consciously decided to compose a narrative-tragedy out of the written or oral passion source at his disposal. Such a case COULD be made for the gospel of Mark, and indeed has been made by Gilbert Bilezikian, amongst others. He has argued that "the Gospel falls naturally into the pattern advocated for Greek tragedy by Aristotle" and that this is the result of "deliberate design"⁴⁹. Bilezikian's claim is not that Mark was trying to write a Greek tragedy, but rather that he saw "the correspondences between Jesus in the Gospel and the hero in Greek tragedy" and that, in the creation of a new literary composition, he borrowed some of the features of this "compatible literary precedent"⁵⁰. The argument in this present section deviates slightly from this approach insofar as we see genres as structures inherent within the mind of an author and in the life of his culture. This means that our picture of the evangelist's compositional activity is not one of a man consciously choosing the tragic genre, but of a man in whom a deep story structure (the tragic paradigm) was generated through a particular understanding of the death of Jesus - an understanding of it as the expiatory rejection and murder of a divine king.

We shall return to this crucial distinction and issue in the next section. In the meantime we must delineate the character and purpose of a paradigmatic reading of tragic story. In order to focus clearly on this distinctive approach, we have decided to introduce paradigmatic analysis of tragedy through a grammatical criticism of "The Bacchae" by Euripides⁵¹; first because its status as a tragic

performance is not seriously questioned by scholars (though how "typical" of Greek tragedy this play is is difficult to say); secondly because it presents some interesting points of comparison and contrast with JOHN. Paradigmatic analysis of tragedy must begin with a brief syntagmatic summary of the story referred to in the play. At the beginning of the play, the god Dionysus enters and speaks the prologue. He describes himself, in the first line, as "the son of Zeus" and he explains his presence as follows: "I have come back to Thebes, the land where I was born...And here I stand, a god incognito, disguised as man" (11.2-6). We learn from this prologue that Dionysus is divine because his father is the father of the gods, but we also learn that his mother was human (Semele), and that her tomb is outside the royal palace of Thebes. Dionysus has come to the city because Semele's sisters, who are still alive, are slandering her and suggesting that Dionysus is not divine, is not the son of Zeus. Only Semele's father, Cadmus, has protected Dionysus' name by honouring Semele's tomb. Dionysus therefore returns to his home city, strikes Semele's sisters into a wild frenzy, and begins the task of revealing himself to mortal eyes as the god Semele bore to Zeus.

The principal antagonist of Dionysus is introduced at the end of the prologue. He is Pentheus, the new king of Thebes, and the grandson of Cadmus. Dionysus claims that this unbelieving Pentheus "revolts against divinity" (1.45) because he neglects the true worship of Dionysus. When this same Pentheus enters the scene it is, inevitably, to criticize the "obscene disorder" (1.232) which Dionysiac worship is producing, and to slander Dionysus as a "charlatan magician" (1.234). Seeing Cadmus and the blind Teiresias in their Dionysiac costumes, he mocks them too. Teiresias rebukes Pentheus with a warning. Dionysus, the

son of Semele, is the supreme blessing of mankind because he is the inventor of the wine that bears away the sufferings of mankind (11.278ff). He is the provider of the true "medicine for misery" (1.283). The worship of Dionysus is therefore to be encouraged, because it is through Dionysus' intercession before Zeus that his followers "may win the favour of Heaven" (1.285). Teiresias warns Pentheus not to mock Dionysus, not to "flout the will of heaven" (1.325), by suggesting that Dionysus is not a son of Zeus. Cadmus urges Pentheus to agree. If Dionysus is not divine, then "the fiction is a noble one" because it confers honour on Cadmus' and Pentheus' family. Pentheus, however, does not hear the warning, not even the warning of a terrible revenge by Dionysus, such as Actaeon received because of his blasphemy against Artemis. Pentheus dismisses the two old men, charging them not to contaminate him with their madness (1.344).

Pentheus, furious at the gullibility of his grandfather and of the blind prophet, commands his attendants to arrest the effeminate stranger (the disguised Dionysus) who has duped the old men. Dionysus voluntarily accepts arrest and is brought before Pentheus. There follows an acerbic and stychomythic exchange which results in Pentheus incarcerating Dionysus in a dark prison inside his palace. However, Pentheus has underestimated his adversary, and his palace is soon in ruins, destroyed by a great earthquake out of which Dionysus walks unscathed. At this point a messenger enters and describes the orgy of indulgence and frenetic activity which Pentheus' mother (Agave) and her sisters are enjoying outside the city on the hills. Pentheus, eager to put a stop to such embarrassing frenzies, decides to take an army and rout the women. Dionysus persuades him, however, that it would be more interesting to go there in disguise and observe the full splendour of a

Bacchic party. In order to be even more inconspicuous, Dionysus persuades Pentheus to wear womens' clothes, and off he goes to the hills. When there, Dionysus tells him that he would have a better view up in a tree. Pentheus agrees, is hoisted up into a fir tree, seen by the women, and torn to pieces. His mother, Agave, takes his head back to Thebes, thinking that it was a lion which she and her women butchered. Before long, the women awake from their madness and Agave sees the full extent of their "awful murder" (l.1245). Dionysus meets out severe penalties on them all and his powerful divinity is reestablished.

"The Bacchae" is an interesting manifestation of the paradigm of tragic story. It is a story which focusses on the expiatory murder of a king, and which conforms to the paradigmatic sequence of PURPOSE, PASSION and PERCEPTION. It begins with the introduction of a divine protagonist, Dionysus, and with the overt statement of a PURPOSE: namely, Dionysus' task of making certain members of the Theban royal family recognize his divinity. It proceeds to the introduction of the antagonist, the unbelieving Pentheus, who establishes a purpose directly in opposition to Dionysus': namely, to *disprove* Dionysus' divinity (even though they are members of the same family) and to quash the Bacchic uprising in his land. Pentheus' PURPOSE is a direct cause of his HAMARTIA - his inability to acknowledge Dionysus as the son of Zeus and to recognize the effeminate stranger in his city as Dionysus ("You do not know what you do", says Dionysus, l.506). The PERIPETEIA which inevitably follows this error occurs when Pentheus makes his stand against Dionysus by attempting to imprison him. From that moment on, Pentheus is estranged from his family, his society and his cosmos. His PASSION ensues, and takes the form of a humiliation (being mocked in womens' clothes), a journey from his city to the "accursed hill"

(1.1386), an elevation in a high tree, and a terrifying SPARAGMOS or separation and scattering of his limbs (the PATHOS). The PERCEPTION occurs at the conclusion of the play, when Pentheus' head is recognized by his mother, and when Dionysus' divinity is finally established.

Seen in this light, we can detect some broad similarities with the story of Jesus in the fourth gospel. The prologue of both stories concentrates upon the same theme: a divine being goes to his home but is rejected by members of his family - in Jesus' case, his earthly and his spiritual family (1.11 and 7.5). In both cases, the protagonist is an unrecognized deity, a "stranger from heaven"⁵², who faces intense hostility and unbelief from the ruling party. In both cases, the goal of the deity is basically philanthropic, for it is Dionysus' desire to share the wine that alleviates man's sufferings, whilst it is Jesus' desire that men should drink of his life-giving blood (John 2, where the wine has been seen as a Dionysiac symbol, and John 6, where the blood of Jesus arguably points to the wine of the Eucharist). In both cases, the tragic HAMARTIA consists of the antagonist's failure to recognize one who is really a member of the same family. In "The Bacchae", Pentheus' grandfather Cadmus is the mother of Semele, making Pentheus and Dionysus, in some sense or other, BROTHERS. In JOHN, both the Jews (the antagonist) and Jesus (the protagonist) share the same Father in heaven (making THEM in some sense BROTHERS), though the protagonist's filial relationship is unique and fulfilled, whilst that of the Jews is shared and unfulfilled. In both cases, the PATHOS consists of the victim being dressed up in humiliating garb (John 19.2-3), led out of the city to an accursed hill (19.17), hoisted up onto a tree (19.18) and then killed. Though there are differences in the PATHOS as well (Jesus is not dismembered), the broad movements of the two stories are similar.

Too great an emphasis on the similarities between these two stories will, however, obscure the individuality of JOHN's narrative presentation. JOHN's story of the death of Jesus needs to be read in its own right, and mapped on its own against our "kernel plot sentence" of tragic story. In JOHN, the protagonist, Jesus, is introduced in the prologue as the creative Word of God who comes to his own country as a human being but is not recognized as the Father's only Son. The PURPOSE of his coming is to give those who receive him and believe in him the right to become the children of God. However, this purpose is threatened because a highly persistent antagonist raises itself up against him, namely, the Jews. Their HAMARTIA consists of the fact that they seem resolutely blind to the truth that Jesus is God's Son. They cannot recognize the identity of the Son who points them to their Father. Far from it; the very suggestion that Jesus is God's only Son makes the same Jewish authorities bent on killing Jesus right from the start (4.18). The PERIPETEIA inevitably comes, after a number of attempts by the Jews to kill Jesus, after the raising of Lazarus in John 11. Jesus' popularity, which in 6.15 had almost led to him being crowned king by the people, ironically disappears after the Jewish council decides to have Jesus killed on the very same charge of kingship. He is arrested, humiliated and executed (the PATHOS) on the instigation of the Jews and by the methods of the Romans. PERCEPTION (anagnorisis) is denied to Pilate and the Jews and placed instead on the lips of Thomas in 20.28: "My Lord and my God!"

Paraphrased in this way, the striking differences between JOHN and indeed all pre-gospel tragedy immediately surface. In "The Bacchae", the unrecognized god Dionysus, at the point of the PERIPETEIA (his imprisonment), becomes an avenging angel who bursts his bonds, rises out

of captivity, humiliates his antagonist and then proceeds to have him torn to bits. In other words, at the turning point in Dionysus' story, the divinity becomes an active punisher of the sin of HAMARTIA - the failure of Pentheus and Semele's sisters to recognize who Dionysus really is. In the gospel of John, however, the protagonist Jesus does entirely the opposite after the PERIPETEIA. It is clear from the display of power and divinity in 18.5-6 that Jesus could have prevented his arrest and manifested a far more impressive display of divine anger than Dionysus'. But instead, even though Jesus allows himself to be bound (18.12,24) and led into the darkness of captivity as Dionysus did, his subsequent behaviour is almost entirely passive. Jesus allows himself to be isolated, humiliated and murdered by his antagonist whilst Dionysus manifestly does not. Indeed, Jesus in JOHN takes the punishment which, in "The Bacchae", is meted out on the degraded king, Pentheus. He does not force his antagonist to recognize his deity as Dionysus does, but rather allows his divinity and supremacy to become visible in his *uplifting*. Whilst Dionysus' power and divinity are seen in a highly aggressive and vindictive attack on his persecutors, those of Jesus are spotlighted in his crucifixion. Indeed, Jesus is actually crowned on his cross.

In chapter two, we cited Roland Barthes' famous essay THE STRUGGLE WITH THE ANGEL, an essay in which Barthes accounted for the surprise-factor in the narrative of Genesis 32.22-32 (Jacob's struggle with the angel) by showing how, at the moment of *dénouement*, the ORIGINATOR, the HELPER and the OPPONENT all turn out to be the same (i.e. God). Barthes demonstrates, in fact, that the surprise in the narrative derives from the subversion of normal, conventional narrative procedures. The same, we propose, is essentially true of John 18-19. Up

until Jesus' humiliation in 19.1-3 (the centre-piece of Act Two of the passion narrative), the story of Jesus conforms neatly to the paradigm of tragic story, as numerous scholars have noticed. However, at the moment of humiliation, a change occurs. The reader's expectations are somehow subverted. This divine king, whose awesome, supernatural and majestic character has been so obvious in the Book of Signs (chapters 1 to 12), suddenly embraces a PATHOS which we rightly feel belongs to his ruthless and unbelieving antagonist (the Jews). That this disobeys the transcendental grammar of tragic story is an understatement. Only in PROMETHEUS BOUND do we find a divine being crucified for love of mankind, but there the antagonist is Zeus, the fault is Prometheus', and the ending ultimately a reconciliatory one. In JOHN, however, the divine king is an innocent PHARMAKOS or scape-goat whose heavenly commission is to lay down his life for his followers. His death is a divine necessity, but a necessity born out of love (3.16), not out of vengeance (as so often in Greek tragedy).

The implications of this paradigmatic reading for our understanding of "the Jews" in JOHN are, finally, significant. Robert Tannehill has written an important essay in which he demonstrates how Israel in Luke-Acts is depicted as a kind of fated tragic protagonist. Tannehill suggests that "the narrative strategy of Luke-Acts takes on meaning if we assume that the author is guiding the readers to experience the story of Israel and its messiah as a tragic story"⁵³. Luke wants the reader to recognize that the recent history of the Jewish people is tragic because it highlights the tragic irony of the Jewish rejection and their consequent peripeteia from "happiness to suffering"⁵⁴. Whether this is actually so in Luke-Acts is another matter, but the interesting thing about JOHN is that "the Jews" are the

ones with the tragic flaw, not the protagonist or hero, Jesus. It is the Jews who fail to recognize where Jesus really comes from, and yet it is not they who suffer the PATHOS in JOHN but Jesus. Usually in tragic stories, the hero's HAMARTIA leads to the hero's downfall. This is particularly clear in "The Bacchae", where Pentheus' error leads to his own destruction. But in JOHN, it is the divine protagonist who suffers the penalty whilst the all-too-human antagonist, whose HAMARTIA is clearly visible, escapes unhurt. In JOHN, it is those who take a warped stand against divinity (HUBRIS) who escape, whilst the divine king, who is innocent and obedient to His Father's will, suffers death. Truly JOHN's story of the death of Jesus discloses the scandal as well as the glory of the Cross.

CHAPTER SIX.

SECTION THREE. TRAGEDY AND HISTORY IN JOHN 18-19.

A key question which arises from this chapter is the following:

"Is the paradigm of tragic story a form which is generated from the evangelist's imagination and subsequently imposed on Jesus-history? Or is it a form which, in some way or another, is already present in the life and death of the historical Jesus and subsequently evoked through the interaction of the evangelist's imagination with his historical traditions?" Put more briefly, "Is tragedy imposed on Jesus-history, or is it discovered within it?" In chapter four of this thesis we proposed a dialectical view of narrative history. That is, we proposed the possibility that the narrative form of historiography corresponds to an element of narrativity within the historical process itself, that it need not necessarily be a fraudulent fiction but a reflection of the way history really is. However, we also showed that, in a fallen world, the narrativity of history will often evade our senses and lie concealed behind an appearance of woeful fragmentation, giving rise to the belief that history is a chaotic phenomenon which is best redescribed in the annal or chronicle forms. We finally concluded that the only way that the narrativity of history may be recalled is by examining it through the lens of biblical history, for it is in biblical history that a contingent rationality is disclosed through God's acts within our apparently disordered space and time.

In this thesis, then, we are working with an historical understanding which we could describe as *theological structuralism*. Our presupposition throughout this work is that historical structures become luminous because of Jesus-history, because it is in Jesus-history that the End (which reveals the meaning of the whole of history) enters the middle of our time *in advance of itself*. When history is appreciated

Christocentrically, then historical phenomena can be structurally described, and it will not be "the structuralist who puts structures into history", but history that "calls forth structural analysis from itself"⁵⁵. These thoughts help us as we decide which of the following two possibilities is correct: that the fourth evangelist has imposed a tragic structure, albeit a subverted structure, on his historical traditions; that Jesus-history is inherently structured in a way resembling the paradigmatic tragic story. Hayden White, somewhat predictably, would certainly opt for the first solution, for he regards historical reconstructions as fictive in character⁵⁶. But there is an alternative to White's philosophical position which is worth bearing in mind in any discussion of this kind. This alternative position has been provided by the great classicist and historian, Francis Cornford, who has contended that there is sometimes something intrinsically tragic in a life which makes "tragedy" the obvious literary genre to use. Cornford's study of Thucydides left him convinced that this same historian had cast the history of the Peloponnesian Wars in an artistic mould of conception which was "inwrought into the very structure of the author's mind"⁵⁷. As he put it, "even his vigilant precaution allowed a certain traditional mode of thought, characteristic of the Athenian mind, to shape the mass of facts"⁵⁸. The mould or principle which Thucydides used was "the tragic theory of human nature - a traditional psychology which Thucydides seemed to have learnt from Aeschylus"⁵⁹. His imagination seized on the facts available to him, and then built them into an ideal construction. His history is the product of an "aesthetic instinct"⁶⁰ by which facts were shaped into a vast tragic story *because they themselves were tragic*.

Cornford's thesis is that Thucydides moulded a long series of events into a plan determined by the tragic art form, and that he did this partly because he was "predisposed to see in the workings of events a train of 'causes' which tragedy had made familiar"⁶¹. For Cornford, however, this is not the end of the story. The tragic conception of history which Thucydides employed derived not merely from a cultural predisposition in his mind but also from the facts themselves. Cornford is willing to allow the possibility that an historian like Thucydides could INVENT his history to suit a tragic mould, and in this respect he would agree with White's judgement that "'invention' also plays a part in the historian's operations"⁶². But Cornford believes in the possibility of INFIGURATION as well as INVENTION. As he puts it, "sometimes the facts happen to fit the mould, and require hardly any modification; mere unconscious selection is enough"⁶³. This is *infiguration*. "In other cases, they have to be stretched a little here, and patted down a little there, and given a twist before they will fit. In extreme instances, where a piece is missing, it is supplied by mythological inference from the interrupted portions which call for completion; and here we reach the other phase of the process, namely *invention*"⁶⁴. Cornford's belief is that Thucydides shaped "all that misery and suffering into the thing of beauty and awe which we call tragedy"⁶⁵ because the facts themselves were intrinsically tragic. Tragedy, in short, was infigured.

These insights offer valuable categories for our discussion of JOHN's story of the death of Jesus. They help us because they enable us to ask the right kind of question, namely: "Is JOHN's tragic scheme an *invention* or an *infiguration*?" In order to answer this question, let us take a short passage from JOHN's passion story as a test-case. At the

beginning of chapter 19, the evangelist presents us with a vivid, shocking and dramatic spectacle: a highly ritualistic mockery of Jesus. Indeed, of all the scenes in the gospels, this one comes closest to achieving that quality of KATHARSIS which Aristotle identified. With superb economy, the evangelist writes as follows:

"Then Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged. And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorns and fixed it on Jesus' head, and they threw around him a cloak of royal purple. Time and again they came up to him, saying, "All hail, 'King of the Jews'!" And they would slap him in the face."

The historicity of this incident has been challenged by a number of scholars, principally because it appears to contradict the chronology offered by MARK and MATTHEW⁶⁶. In both the latter accounts, the mockery and scourging of Jesus occurs after Pilate has handed Jesus over for crucifixion, and not in the middle of Jesus' interrogation (as here, in John 19.1-3). Thus Mark 15.20 reads: "When the soldiers had finished mocking Jesus, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes back on him. *Then they led him out to crucify him*" (Italics mine) In defence of those who have tried to harmonise the two pictures, it is by no means out of the question that Jesus underwent two separate beatings, one intended to extract a confession (at the mid-point of his trial, as in John 19.1-3), and one at the end of his trial which formed part of the execution (a kind of preface to the capital punishment). Two factors support this: first of all, there were different forms of bodily chastisement used by the Romans. FUSTIGATIO (beating), FLAGELLATIO (flogging) and VERBERATIO (scourging). It is quite possible that MARK and JOHN are alluding to two different forms of punishment ("fragelloun" in Mark 15.15 and "mastigoun" in John 19.1)⁶⁷. Secondly, LUKE's passion narrative indicates that there was probably more than one flogging. A

careful reading of Luke 23 reveals that there was a mockery of Jesus at the mid-point of his trial, at the hands of Herod (ch.23.11). At this point, LUKE and JOHN agree. But Luke 23.22 also suggests that Pilate had Jesus whipped ("paideuein") on the way to his execution, which would tie in with MARK and MATTHEW.

It seems then, whether we are predisposed to harmonisation or not, that there are solid grounds for defending the position of the mockery episode in John 19.1-3. What of the incident itself ? Was such a humiliation of a prisoner at the hands of the Romans likely to have occurred ? Most commentators, working with the principle of analogy, have sought to find comparable incidents in order to defend the historicity of such a mockery and torture. The incident most commonly alluded to by scholars is reported by Philo in his IN FLACCUM (VI. 36-39). Public disturbances occurred in the city of Alexandria in AD 39 when it was learnt that the population was expected to welcome Agrippa as king. The rioting crowd cornered a madman named Carabas and drove him into the gymnasium. There they set him on a prominent platform and dressed him with a mock crown (made out of a sheet of byblus), a royal robe (made out of a rug) and a sceptre (fashioned from papyrus litter). Some young men carrying rods on their shoulders then proceeded to stand either side of him in imitation of a bodyguard. "Then others approached him, some pretending to salute him, others to sue for justice, others to consult him on state affairs". Then the mob began to hail him as "lord" in the native language of Agrippa⁶².

The humiliation of a surrogate king-figure therefore has a well-attested analogy in the work of Philo. Other scholars have pointed to the game of "mock-king" played by soldiers during the Roman Saturnalia as evidence that Roman soldiers themselves indulged in the kind of

behaviour directed at Agrippa, a friend of Caesar, in Alexandria⁶⁹. But perhaps the most important thing to note in this context is that the humiliation of a king-figure was frequently seen on stage at the time of Jesus, as Philo's account of the mockery of Carabas testifies. Philo writes that Carabas "received the insignia of kingship and was tricked out as a king" *"as in some theatrical farce"* (*"en theatrikois mimois"*). In Euripides' THE BACCHAE, which we examined in the last section, we have precisely the kind of farcical humiliation of a royal figure that Roman legionairies must have been accustomed to seeing. In this context, the king of Thebes is forced by Dionysus to dress as a woman:

PENTHEUS: What is the costume I must wear ?

DIONYSUS: On your head I shall set a wig with long curls.

PENTHEUS: And then ?

DIONYSUS: Next, robes to your feet and a net for your hair.

PENTHEUS: Yes ? Go on.

DIONYSUS: Then a thyrsus for your hand and a skin of dappled fawn.

What conclusion can we draw from such comparisons ? Principally that John 19.1-3 is not the "invention" but the "infiguration" of a genuinely tragic incident. Put another way, the evangelist does not invent a tragic scene in which Jesus is hailed as king. Rather, he sees the tragic potential already inherent within the historical episode - a tragic potential which may well have ultimately originated from stage performances. Our tentative argument here is that the soldier's humiliation of Jesus as king was something which they had witnessed either in pantomimic or tragic drama. Certainly the fourth evangelist's portrayal of the incident has a dramatic quality, as Robert Strachan pointed out⁷⁰. JOHN gives the incident drama by making it the centre-piece of Part Two of his passion story (this is the fourth episode in a seven-scene section stretching from Ch.18.28 to ch.19.16a) and by creating a two-stage setting in which the action takes place. This

dramatic character makes the scene a kind of ritual, a fact not without significance to a Jewish mind knowledgeable of those royal passion rites which featured in the cultic worship of first temple Judaism - nor to a hellenistic mind cognisant of the ritualistic origins of the tragic mythos. The point however is this: the tragic and dramatic quality to John 19.1-3 is not an unwarranted intrusion upon JOHN's source-material but rather a legitimate and poignant evocation of a significance already dormant within it.

It is important to conclude on a theological note, so that the full impact of JOHN's narrative presentation may be felt in our reader response. In chapter two of this thesis, we criticized structuralist criticism of biblical narrative because it suggested that the deep structures within the gospels originated in the minds of the evangelists rather than in the history of Jesus. In chapter four and in the present context, we have replaced this misconception with the more cogent view that the evangelists were involved in a dialectical relationship with their traditions, a relationship in which structure was sought and disclosed at the same time. In the last few pages, what we have been arguing is that the paradigmatic tragic story, originating in primitive myths concerning the expiatory sacrifice of a divine king, is the structure behind John 18-19 because it is first of all a structure in Jesus-history. In the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, the hero of tragic myth becomes concrete fact in a way that is actually redemptive and salvific. For this reason, Maud Bodkin can say that, "in Christ appears preeminently this character felt obscurely in such heroes of poetic tragedy as Oedipus and Lear"⁷¹. Once and for all, the tragic myth of the dying and resurgent god is fulfilled in history, as C.S. Lewis often argued⁷². The passion of Jesus is the pleroma of tragic story.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER SIX.

1. W.Doty, in THE NEW TESTAMENT AND STRUCTURALISM, p.294.
2. T.Todorov, INTRODUCTION TO POETICS, p.6.
3. Ibid, p.7.
4. D.Patte and A.Patte, STRUCTURAL EXEGESIS, p.11.
5. For a good discussion defending the "sacrificial" dimension of the Johannine story of the death of Jesus (which is by no means seen by all scholars), see pp.12-13 of Barnabas Lindars' THE PASSION IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL.
6. B.Lindars, THE PASSION IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.19.
7. R.H.Strachan, THE FOURTH EVANGELIST: DRAMATIST OR HISTORIAN ? p.16.
8. F.R.M.Hitchcock, IS THE FOURTH GOSPEL A DRAMA ? p.317.
9. C.R.Bowen, THE FOURTH GOSPEL AS DRAMATIC MATERIAL, p.293.
10. F.Pfister, HERAKLES UND CHRISTUS, Archiv Fur Religionswissenschaft,34, 1937, 42-60.
11. C.M.Connick, THE DRAMATIC CHARACTER OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.160.
12. S.Smalley, JOHN: EVANGELIST AND INTERPRETER, pp.192f.
13. W.R.Domeris, THE JOHANNINE DRAMA, pp.29-30.
14. N.Scott, THE BROKEN CENTER, p.122.
15. These quotations from Clifford Leech's TRAGEDY (London, Methuen, 1969), pp.1-2.
16. W.Lee Humphreys, THE TRAGIC VISION AND THE HEBREW TRADITION, p.xiii.
17. N.Frye, ANATOMY OF CRITICISM, p.36.
18. H.Weisinger, THE MYTH AND RITUAL APPROACH TO SHAKESPEAREAN TRAGEDY, p.152. Weisinger traces the roots of tragedy to the myth and ritual pattern of "the dying-reborn God-king".
19. J.Holloway, THE STORY OF THE NIGHT, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961, p.135.
20. Ibid, p.135.
21. L.Ryken, BIBLICAL TRAGEDY, p.95.
22. Ibid, p.95.

23. K.Burke, GRAMMAR OF MOTIVES, p.39.
24. Ibid, pp.39-40.
25. F.Fergusson, THE IDEA OF A THEATRE, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1949. p.18.
26. Richard Lattimore, STORY-PATTERNS IN GREEK TRAGEDY, London, Athlone Press, 1964.
27. I am indebted to Brian Vicker's TOWARDS GREEK TRAGEDY, pp.60-64, for this summary of Else's position. Wicker claims that Else's views are now much more influential than when they first appeared.
28. W.Lee Humphreys, THE TRAGIC VISION AND THE HEBREW TRADITION, pp.3-44.
29. B.Berke, TRAGIC THOUGHT AND THE GRAMMAR OF TRAGIC MYTH, p.1.
30. Ibid, p.32.
31. C.Leech, TRAGEDY, p.8.
32. P.Duke, IRONY IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.140.
33. D.M.Gunn, THE FATE OF KING SAUL: AN INTERPRETATION OF A BIBLICAL STORY, JSOTS 14 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980). W.Lee Humphreys, THE TRAGEDY OF KING SAUL: A STUDY OF THE STRUCTURE OF I SAMUEL 9-31, JSOT 6. 1978. pp. 18-27.
34. C.R.Bowen, THE FOURTH GOSPEL AS DRAMATIC MATERIAL, p.293.
35. R.Scholes and R.Kellog, THE NATURE OF NARRATIVE, p.5.
36. W.Lee Humphreys, THE TRAGIC VISION AND THE HEBREW TRADITION, p.2.
37. G.C.Nicholson, DEATH AS DEPARTURE, p.3.
38. J.T.Forestell, THE WORD OF THE CROSS, p.60.
39. Ibid, pp.82-3.
40. Ibid, p.85.
41. Brian Wicker, TOWARDS GREEK TRAGEDY, p.60.
42. F.Pfister, HERAKLES UND CHRISTUS, ARW 34, 1937. pp.42-60.
43. M.Hengel, CRUCIFIXION, London, SCM, 1977, pp.5-6, footnote 6.
44. F.R.M.Hitchcock, THE DRAMATIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL, The Expositor. Ser.7, vol.4. 1907. pp.266-279.
45. F.R.M.Hitchcock, IS THE FOURTH GOSPEL A DRAMA ? p.307.

46. Ibid, p.308.
47. Ibid, p.308.
48. Ibid, p.317.
49. G.Bilezikian, THE LIBERATED GOSPEL: A COMPARISON OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK AND GREEK TRAGEDY. Michigan, Baker Books. 1977, p. 78.
50. Ibid, p. 102.
51. Translation, William Arrowsmith. Edition: GREEK TRAGEDIES, VOL.III. David Grene and Richard Lattimore, editors. Chicago. University of Chicago Press. 1968.
52. This phrase is taken from the title of Marinus de Jonge's book, JESUS: STRANGER FROM HEAVEN AND SON OF GOD (Missoula, Scholars Press, 1977).
53. R.C.Tannehill, ISRAEL IN LUKE-ACTS: A TRAGIC STORY, JBL 104/1. 1985. p.74.
54. Ibid, p.79.
55. J.Pouillon's STRUCTURALISM: A DEFINITIONAL ESSAY, in A.Johnson, STRUCTURALISM AND BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS, p.46.
56. Hayden White writes, in THE HISTORICAL TEXT AS LITERARY ARTIFACT, that "no historical event is intrinsically tragic" (p.47).
57. F.Cornford, THUCYDIDES MYTHISTORICUS, p.vii.
58. Ibid, p.viii.
59. Ibid, p.x.
60. Ibid, p.131.
61. Ibid, p.137.
62. H.White, METAHISTORY, pp.6-7.
63. F.Cornford, ibid, p.132..
64. Ibid, p.132.
65. Ibid, p.250. For a balanced review essay of Cornford's thesis, see Kieran Egan's THUCYDIDES, TRAGEDIAN, in THE WRITING OF HISTORY: LITERARY FORM AND HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING, ed. R.H.Canary & H.Kozicki (University of Wisconsin Press, 1978).
66. B.Lindars, THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, p.563: "John has produced an impossible sequence".
67. R.E.Brown, JOHN, vol.II, p.874.

68. Philo, IN FLACCUM, VI.36-9.

69. R.E.Brown, JOHN, vol.II, p.888.

70. See pp.172f of this thesis.

71. Maud Bodkin, ARCHETYPAL PATTERNS IN POETRY: PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDIES OF IMAGINATION, Oxford, Oxford University Press, p.284.

72. C.S.Lewis, MYTH BECAME FACT, 1944: "Now as myth transcends thought, Incarnation transcends myth. The heart of Christianity is a myth which is also a fact. The old myth of the Dying God, *without ceasing to be myth*, comes down from the heaven of legend and imagination to the earth of history. It *happens* - at a particular date, in a particular place, followed by definable historical consequences". pp.43-44 of GOD IN THE DOCK, London, Collins, 1979.

CHAPTER SEVEN. JOHN 18-19 AS COMMUNITY NARRATIVE.
SECTION ONE. THE ADOPTION NARRATIVE OF JOHN 19.25-27.

When we come to a text such as John 18-19, narrative criticism is not only concerned with literary qualities and deep structures, but also with the function of JOHN's narrative Christology in its original, proposed social milieu. In this thesis, we recognize that the task of identifying the social function of narrative can become an entirely arbitrary and subjective exercise. One of the problems with the otherwise very insightful examples of redaction criticism on JOHN is that they tend to allegorize details of the gospel into incidents from the community's reconstructed history. In chapter three, we indicated the circularity of this thinking, and the disrespect for Jesus-history which such approaches entail. Instead of treating JOHN as an allegory of community history, we suggested a more cautious and innovative approach in which rigorous literary analysis and sociological explanation work together in harmony. For example, instead of regarding John 9 as an allegory of an incident in the life of JOHN's community (in which a Christian minister runs foul of the Jamnia edict by healing a Jew and leading him to Christ), we would want to ask whether there are not significant narrative images in this chapter which are patient of a sociological explanation. Following the method suggested by Kenneth Burke, and the similar approach of Wayne Meeks, we are therefore interested in social imagery in John 18-19, and the associational network of such images of which it is a part. From that basis alone can we proceed to valid sociological generalisations.

Where, then, are the significant social images in John 18-19 ? At this stage, it is vital to be honest about what does and does not constitute a significant social image, otherwise there will be no end to

the amount of speculation practised. In Kenneth Burke's programme, one of the most obvious and forceful images for social cohesion is the image of family and kinship ("familistic images", as Burke called them¹). In John 18-19, the evangelist betrays something of an interest in familial relationships at a number of points. In 18.13, the narrator explains that Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas. In 18.15, the narrator explains that the anonymous disciple was "well-known" to the high priest. Whilst "gnōstos" does not imply a blood-relationship, it certainly indicates a close intimacy as Barrett has demonstrated from other uses of the same word in the LXX². In 18.26, the narrator tells us that the high priest's slave who interrogates Peter was "a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off". Finally, in 19.25-27, the narrator explains the relationships between those witnessing Jesus' death: "his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene." Added to these women is "the disciple whom Jesus loved", and it is upon him and Jesus' mother that the subsequent action focusses. Jesus, as his final task here on earth, turns to his mother and says of the BD, "Woman, here is your son!" Then he turns to the BD and says, "Here is your mother!" In giving these two people to one another, Jesus begins a new family at the moment of his death.

The familistic images provided by the narrator in 18.13,15 and 26 do not strike any of the commentators as particularly significant, and indeed the narrative would not suffer a great deal from their omission. However, most of the commentators are agreed upon the centrality of the familistic picture in John 19.25-27, since the BD is seen by many as the founding figure of the Johannine community. Most of the commentaries and a host of articles agree that this narrative pericope has a place of key importance within the passion narrative and

indeed the gospel as a whole³. The task of actually assessing the significance of 19.25f. is, however, a great deal more demanding than it seems since a significant amount of literature has been produced on this text, especially by Roman Catholic scholars interested in the role of Jesus' mother⁴. This does not, however, preclude some general comments about the narrative mood and action of 19.26f. One striking fact is that there is nothing of the hatred and bitter irony, the darkness and the dereliction, of MARK's account of Jesus' last moments. Instead, "Jesus savours the proximity of those close to him" and crowns his life by creating new relationships⁵. Thus, the story, which dwells on Jesus' filial devotion and the future of his followers, "suggests a new beginning at the moment when all is over"⁶. The mood is not dark and oppressive, but forward-looking and hopeful, for Jesus here fulfils "the last office of filial piety"⁷ by creating a new family out of those nearest and dearest to him.

The context of this narrative thus creates the "effect of a testamentary disposition"⁸ in which Jesus, after leaving his meagre garments to the soldiers in fulfilment of Scripture, provides for his mother and his dearest friend in the last clause of his spoken will. Put this way, we can see that 19.25ff does indeed qualify as one of Burke's familistic images, for "at the time of the Lord's death a new family is brought into being"⁹. "Together, mother and son, they form the nucleus of the new family of faith. The other disciples are 'brothers' and members of his family; all believers are the children of God"¹⁰. With the creation of this new family, however, a problem arises concerning the nature of the new status and the new role assigned to the BD in 19.25ff. Many scholars define the task assigned to the BD here in terms of a "succession motif"¹¹. Since "the mother of Jesus and the beloved

disciple are to stand in the relation of mother and son", there is a sense in which "the beloved disciple moves into the place of Jesus himself"¹². Maynard puts it more overtly when he writes that "the Beloved Disciple is the earthly successor to Jesus"¹³, as does Grassi, who argues that the whole pericope is designed to authenticate JOHN's teaching by suggesting a line of succession from Jesus to the BD¹⁴. Others, such as Anton Dauer, introduce the concept of adoption, claiming that, "Woman, here is your son!" and "Here is your mother!" are adoption formulae used in the ancient world¹⁵. Scholars therefore fluctuate from seeing the BD as Jesus' successor and the BD as Mary's newly adopted son.

The two motifs of succession and adoption need not be seen in an "either-or" but in a "both-and" sense, since adoption can imply succession. By adoption, we mean "the creation of an artificial family relationship analogous to that of parent and child, or sonship, which is accepted by all parties as permanent"¹⁶. When 'adoption' is understood in this light, it is easy to see how some scholars have suggested this metaphor as an accurate description of what is happening in 19.26f. Two things, however, need to be said. First, it is extremely doubtful that an actual adoption formula is being cited by Jesus since none of the suggested parallels corresponds exactly with his reported utterance. In the Jewish literature, Psalm 2.7 is often referred to as is the LXX of Tobit 7.12 (at the engagement of the young Tobit to Sarah: "From now on you are her brother, behold she is your sister!")¹⁷, but neither of these is exactly analogous. Extra-biblical parallels are also evoked, but none has any precise similarity with Jesus' last will and testament in John 19.26f¹⁷. This means that the idea of adoption should not be pressed too hard, especially since - secondly - the new artificial family

relationship between Jesus' mother and the BD is established by Jesus and not by a parent or by a guardian. Schnackenburg is therefore right to urge us not to insist on the word adoption in a narrow, legal sense. That would only be possible if Jesus' mother was the INITIATOR in 19.26f and if an actual formula was being cited¹⁹.

The concept of succession is equally relevant and interesting, however, as we have already implied. In these verses, the BD becomes Jesus' true representative, earthly successor and paradigmatic disciple. This is further supported by the scene in 13.23f in which the BD is openly introduced for the first time. Here the narrator describes the BD as lying on "the bosom of Jesus" (Brown translates this as "close beside Jesus"), a phrase which recalls the comment in 1.18 about Jesus being "in the bosom of the Father" (EN TŌ KOLPŌ TOU IESOU// EIS TON KOLPON TOU PATROS). As many commentators have pointed out, the implication is that the BD shares the same kind of relationship with Jesus as Jesus enjoys with the Father; that is, a distinctive and highly intimate relationship (though the BD, of course, is not a second Messiah in JOHN)²⁰. What scholars have failed to point out is that the description of the BD lying on Jesus' bosom is part of the succession motif which finds its fullest expression in 19.26f. In Jubilees 22.6f, it is written that, when Abraham gave Jacob his final blessing and last will, both Abraham and Jacob "lay down together on one bed, and Jacob slept on the bosom of Abraham, his father's father". There is therefore a precedent for lying on the bosom of one close to death in the intertestamental sources, and again the context encourages the idea of succession. It may also suggest the idea of adoption if lying on the testator's bosom was an ancient ceremony of adoption, as Brownlee has contended²¹. If that is correct,

then it might suggest why 'adoption' and 'succession' are mentioned so often in readings of 19.26f.

The picture in 19.25-27 therefore seems to be one in which Jesus creates a new family of faith by adopting the BD as his 'true successor on earth. This pericope, so easily overlooked in a hasty reading of JOHN's passion narrative, therefore turns out to be more than just a casual incident in Jesus' last moments. As Lindars rightly says, "a great depth of meaning is indicated by means of a very few words, composed with the utmost restraint"²¹. A number of factors reveal the centrality of 19.25-27: first of all, it seems as if the third act of JOHN's passion narrative (19.16b-42) is made up of seven scenes, with the present pericope (19.25-27) forming the centre-piece of that structure²². Secondly, the "men...de" clause in verse 24 draws attention to 19.25f. because it sets up a contrast between the four soldiers in vv.23-24 and the four women in v.25²³. As Lightfoot puts it, these women represent "the believing counterpart of the four unbelieving soldiers"²⁴ ("the faithful counterpart of the four unbelieving soldiers", Hoskyns²⁵), and their new relationships of love established by Jesus powerfully illustrate the unity implied in the seamless robe of verse 24. Thirdly, the narrator's comment that, directly after this adoption, Jesus knew that his work was now finished (19.28) suggest that "Jesus' words to his mother and to the disciple which are a single whole, have something to do with the completion of his work"²⁶. More than that, the "meta touto" in 19.28 indicates that the adoption of the BD into his mother's family really constitutes the climactic work in his ministry.

John 19.25-27 is therefore a climactic narrative pericope in the Johannine passion account. It is a fulfilment *in action* of the truth enunciated by the narrator in 13.1. Here the narrator informs us that

"Jesus was aware that the hour had come for him to pass from this world to the Father. Having loved his own who were in this world, he now showed his love for them to the very end". Narrative echo effects between 13.1 and 19.25f are extensive. The concept of Jesus' HORA is mentioned in 13.1 and 19.27. There is an echo of Jesus' TOUS IDIOUS (13.1) in the BD's TA IDIA (19.27). Furthermore, the distinctive TELEIOTHE of 19.28 (only used here in JOHN) picks up the TELOS of 13.1. These narrative echo-effects indicate that, for the evangelist, Jesus' adoption of the BD is a demonstration of the fact that Jesus loved his own to the very end. Consequently, attempts to read a deeper symbolism in this episode are unfounded. Mary is not a symbol of Jewish Christianity here²⁷, nor is she a new Eve²⁸ or a Rachel redivivus²⁹. The scene at the foot of the cross concentrates on the new role given to the BD as the son and guardian of Jesus' mother. It is therefore best understood in terms of *succession* and *adoption*, as we have already indicated. At the time of Jesus' return to his Father (the *hora* of 13.1 and 19.27), Jesus creates a new family at the cross. This family includes the mother of Jesus and embraces the BD as Jesus' successor and adopted relation. The home of this family (TA IDIA in 19.27), is the home of the BD himself - a fact which has sociological implications, as we shall see.

CHAPTER SEVEN.

SECTION TWO. SOURCE AND REDACTION IN JOHN 19.25-27.

SOURCE.

From our exegesis of John 19.25-27 in the previous section it is evident that the issues of source and redaction are important for our understanding of the social function of this pericope. We shall leave the question of sociology until the next section, since it merits a detailed discussion on its own. However, in the present section, we want to address ourselves to two questions: first, "what historical sources lie behind John 19.25-27, if any?" Secondly, "what is the function of John 19.25-27 in the Johannine redaction?" The first of these two questions (whether John 19.25f actually happened) will lead us to ask further questions, such as who the BD was, whether this incident can be harmonised with the synoptic passion stories, and whether the Roman executing party would have allowed friends and family so close to the cross in the first place. The second issue, the function of John 19.25-27 in the Johannine redaction, will involve the reconstruction of that network of familistic images of which it forms both part and conclusion. It is our contention that the evangelist is here depending upon reliable eye-witness testimony, and that his redactional purpose is to depict the BD's family as the true family of faith, over and against the earthly family of Jesus, and the Jewish family deriving from father Abraham. The sociological significance of such an image for JOHN's community will be the topic of the next section.

The historicity of 19.25-27 depends partly on an understanding of the true identity of the beloved disciple, and his part in the composition of this story. As is well known, theories concerning the identity of this figure whom the evangelist knows as, "the disciple whom

Jesus loved", are numerous. However, we want to begin our own investigation with the bold statement that there is absolutely no evidence *within* the fourth gospel for identifying the BD with John bar-Zebedee. Furthermore, the synoptics actually prevent us from making such an identification for the following reasons:

- 1) JOHN 13.23f depicts the BD lying on the bosom of his master. Is it conceivable that Jesus would have allowed John bar-Zebedee to do this after Jesus had told the sons of Zebedee that they were not ready for places of honour in the kingdom of God ?³⁰ (Mark 10.35f). Furthermore, is it conceivable that the synoptics would have omitted such a display of intimacy if someone as important as John bar Zebedee had been so close to Jesus at such a key moment ?
- 2) The narrator tells us that the other disciple in 18.15 (obviously the BD) was "well-known" to the high priest. Is it possible that a man whom the synoptics portray as a Galilean fisherman would have had such an intimate relationship with a prominent religious leader in Jerusalem ?³¹ John bar-Zebedee's Galilean roots are a real problem here, as they are for those who try to argue that he is the *author* of JOHN³².
- 3) The narrator informs us that the BD took Mary to his own home at the time of Jesus' crucifixion outside Jerusalem. This implies somewhere close to Jerusalem or even *IN* Jerusalem and not somewhere as distant as the shores of Galilee where John bar-Zebedee lived³³.
- 4) Furthermore, if the BD was John bar-Zebedee, then we need to ask why the synoptic crucifixion stories state that none of the Twelve was present at the cross.
- 5) If John bar-Zebedee had been present at the transfiguration of Jesus, as all three synoptic gospels state, then why is this episode not

reported in JOHN ? Surely an incident such as this would have been of immense importance to a writer concerned with the DOXA of Jesus ? ³⁴

6) If John bar-Zebedee ran with Peter to the empty tomb on the first Easter morning, then why do the synoptic resurrection narratives forget to mention that John accompanied Peter ?

Where, then, does the traditional identification of the BD as the apostle John come from ? The evidence is found solely in much later, second century documents such as Irenaeus' ADV.HAER.III.1.1, the Muratorian fragment, the Latin anti-Marcionite Prologue and Clement of Alexandria (as quoted by Eusebius). Irenaeus claims that John, the disciple of the Lord who reclined on Jesus' bosom at the Last Supper, published his gospel at Ephesus after the other gospels had been written. Now it needs to be recognized that two questionable assumptions have to be made if we are to accept this late second century identification of John bar-Zebedee as the BD. The first assumption is that these sources are reliable. The second is that the reference in each is specifically to the son of Zebedee (they refer to him only as "John"). On the first account, it has been argued that Irenaeus' information is particularly open to criticism. He places John at Ephesus and yet there is no evidence in the NT that the son of Zebedee was ever at Ephesus (Paul makes no mention of the apostle in his letter to the Ephesians)³⁵. Furthermore, Irenaeus claims that Papias had heard this "John" and yet Papias himself, according to Eusebius, claimed quite the opposite³⁶. Can Irenaeus' information on other matters therefore be regarded as reliable ? On the second account, none of the late second century sources identify this John as Zebedee's son. Indeed, Sanders has found at least one instance where Irenaeus refers to John bar-Zebedee

without giving any hint that this man was the BD behind the fourth gospel³⁷.

A more plausible interpretation of this second century evidence runs like this: Irenaeus, in an era of gnostic heresy and alternative gospels, wanted to give the fourth gospel the seal of apostolic authority by revealing that its author was a disciple of the Lord's. There was at Ephesus, it has been suggested, another John who was the author of the gospel, and Irenaeus and other writers of the time mistook this John for the Son of Zebedee. J. Edgar Bruns has argued that there was some confusion between John Mark and John bar-Zebedee in antiquity so it is possible that this other John was John Mark³⁸. However, it is more likely that the John in question was in fact a presbyter in Ephesus, and not an actual eye-witness of the ministry of Jesus. The second letter of JOHN begins with the phrase "ὁ presbuteros" ("from the elder") and Papias mentions a John who was an "elder". Interestingly, Papias' testimony describes BOTH the living apostles (Andrew, Peter, Philip, Thomas, James, John and Matthew) AND later church elders (Aristion and John) as "disciples of the Lord". What might well have happened is that Irenaeus and other leading figures in the late second century churches thought that John the presbyter was really John the apostle, not realizing that the former had not been an eye-witness of Jesus at all. The fact that both the presbyter and the apostle could be described as "disciples of the Lord" would only have added to the confusion.

Does this therefore mean that the gospel of JOHN was written by someone who never knew Jesus and that its historical testimony is therefore worthless? Not at all. Just as the gospel of MARK was based on an apostle's eye-witness testimony (Peter) but actually written by an

evangelist who had not been with Jesus, so the gospel of JOHN was based on the eye-witness testimony of the beloved disciple but actually written by an evangelist who had not been a companion of Jesus (John the elder). The fourth gospel distinguishes between its authority (the BD) and its author at John 21.24. The narrator writes that the beloved disciple is the one who spoke and wrote of the things reported in chapter 21. This seems to be an open confession that the BD is in fact the author. Yet we know from verse 23 that the BD must be dead because the narrator appears to be correcting a controversial belief in the immortality of the BD. Furthermore, the narrator distinguishes himself from the BD at a number of points. Here he writes, "we know that what he said is true". In 19.35, after describing the effusion of blood and water from the side of Christ, the narrator says of the BD's testimony, "he is telling what he knows to be true that you too may have faith". Again there appears to be a distinction between the implied author (the BD) and the actual author who uses the pronoun "we" and who therefore must be a leading figure in the Johannine community.

Who, then, is the BD ? It is interesting to note that both Schnackenburg and Brown have recently moved away from their earlier identification of the BD as John bar-Zebedee to Oscar Cullman's view that he was an anonymous Judaeen companion of the Lord³⁹. In THE JOHANNINE CIRCLE (1976), Cullmann contended that Irenaeus' argument about the authorship of the fourth gospel could no longer be reconciled with the general evidence of the gospel itself⁴⁰. He therefore turned from the evidence external to JOHN to evidence internal to it. He began by stating that "we must first of all rid ourselves of the expectation that the disciple must be sought among the Twelve"⁴¹. Indeed, Cullmann argues that the Twelve do not play any essential role anywhere in the

fourth gospel⁴². Cullmann then goes on to portray the BD as follows: "As he only appears in scenes which take place in Judaea, at the beginning and the end of the gospel, we must assume that he comes from this region and that Jesus met him in Judaea. He is a former disciple of John the Baptist. He began to follow Jesus in Judaea when Jesus himself was in close proximity to the Baptist. He shared the life of his master during Jesus' last stay in Jerusalem. He was known to the High priest...The fact that the final redactor published or completed his work and made a declaration about it in the first person plural ("we know") seems to indicate that the disciple collected a whole group of followers about himself"⁴³. According to Cullmann, the internal evidence of the gospel indicates that the BD was a Judaeian disciple whose name has not been recorded but who was sufficiently important to attract a Johannine circle around him.

Cullmann is content to leave the BD's identity unknown. I am not. If one attempts to read the fourth gospel as a narrative in its own right, forgetting for a moment those spurious second century arguments for the identity of the BD, then there is only one name which we can attach to this figure. Even the casual reader cannot help but notice that the BD makes his appearance in chapter 13, at the beginning of the book of Christ's passion (though it is arguable that he makes his first appearance at 1.35 as one of the "tōn mathētōn autou duo", especially since the same phrase appears again at 21.2, where one of the two disciples must be the BD). In 13.23 we see for the first time a disciple "on āgapa ō Iesous" leaning on Jesus' breast at the Last Supper. In 18.15 he is introduced again at the gate to Annas' courtyard as "allos mathētēs". In 19.26 he is seen at the foot of the cross and called "tōn mathētēn...ōn āgapa". In 20.2, in the run to the empty tomb with

Peter, he is described as "allon mathētēn ōn ephilei ō Iesous". In 20.3 he is "ō allos mathētēs". In 20.4, he is again described as "ō allos mathētēs". In 21.2, he is one of the "alloi ek tōn mathētōn autou duo" beside Lake Tiberias. In 21.7 he is described as "ō mathētēs ekeinos ōn āgapa ō Iesous". In 21.20 he is again "ton mathētēn ōn āgapa ō Iesous". In the context of the fourth gospel, there is really only one candidate for this enigmatic figure known as "the other disciple" or "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (agapein/philein).

Whilst it is true that Jesus is presented as a man in love with all his disciples, there is one character in the fourth gospel who is especially honoured as a follower beloved of Jesus, and he features prominently in the two chapters immediately before the appearance of the phrase, "the beloved disciple". In chapter 11 verse 1 we are introduced to "a man named Lazarus who was sick...from Bethany". Lazarus' two sisters send word to Jesus that "the one *whom you love* is sick". Now that phrase, "ōn phileis", is significant. In a gospel where Jesus openly confesses his love for all his sheep (chapter 10), the phrase "the one whom you love" is striking. The absence of any name in the sister's message is also significant because it implies that Jesus will immediately recognize who they are referring to as "ōn phileis", in spite of the fact that he loves *all* his followers. And Jesus *does* indeed identify the one whom he loves as Lazarus, for the narrator makes another overt and, by now, apparently redundant statement in verse 5 to the effect that "āgapa de ō Iesous tēn Marthan kai tēn adelphēn autēs kai ton Lazaron" (notice the emphasis given to "āgapa" and "Lazaron" by their position at the beginning and end of this sentence). Furthermore, when Jesus returns to Lazarus' home to find Lazarus four days dead, and when Jesus approaches the tomb to see where Lazarus is buried, he is

described as "weeping". The reaction of the Jews to this demonstration of intense bereavement yet again confirms Jesus' special love for Lazarus. They remark, "Ide pōs ephilei auton" - "behold, how much he loved him".

Lazarus is the focus of the narrative action as well as Jesus' love in chapter 11, and he appears again in chapter 12 when Jesus is anointed by Mary and later on when many of the Jews go to Bethany to see Lazarus, "the one whom he had raised from death". It is clear from the response of Caiaphas and his council at the end of chapter 11 that the raising of Lazarus is the last straw. It is the turning-point in the narrative of the fourth gospel, because it is this dramatic resuscitation which leads the council to seek Jesus' death (and indeed Lazarus', according to 12.10). From this point, the passion is truly imminent and indeed the bell tolls for Jesus at the very beginning of chapter 13, when we learn that Jesus' hour has at last come. It is quite plausible therefore that Lazarus is the disciple who reclines on Jesus' breast at the Last Supper because he has appeared as the "bosom friend"⁴⁴ of Jesus in the two immediately preceding chapters (note that we have just seen Lazarus reclining "sun autō" at table in 12.2). Furthermore, there is nothing in JOHN's account to suggest that only the Twelve were present during this meal. Indeed, the very resuscitation of Lazarus only a few days before might well have been regarded as a natural reason for Jesus allowing him a place of special intimacy and honour at the Last Supper. The fact that the synoptics do not mention Lazarus need not be surprising since they prefer to spotlight the Twelve and not lesser known figures as the fourth gospel does (Nathaniel, Nicodemus, Lazarus, etc)⁴⁵.

In 18.15, where the other disciple who allows Peter entry to Annas' courtyard is undoubtedly the BD⁴⁶, there are again good reasons for identifying the BD as Lazarus. Twice the narrator stresses that the BD was well-known to the high priest, a fact which we have already demonstrated makes little sense if the BD was John bar-Zebedee, a lowly Galilean fisherman. But if Lazarus was a prominent Jew, then the phrase "gnōstos tōu archierōs" makes very good sense. What evidence is there that Lazarus was such a prominent social figure? The evidence is admittedly implicit but it comes from two directions: first, the fourth evangelist seems to have a special interest in people of high social standing such as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. This tendency leads us to infer that Lazarus too may have been a leading social figure. Secondly, there is something in the way that the Jews flock to Lazarus' home after the resuscitation miracle to suggest that he was an important and well-known person. Had Lazarus have been a lesser mortal, the attraction and the controversy may well have been proportionately less. When Jesus raises Jairus' daughter in MARK, after all, the event seems to arouse no great scandal even though Jairus was a ruler in the local synagogue (though this may well have been due to Jesus' demand for reticence). If Lazarus did indeed have a high social profile, then it is not at all surprising that he should have been friends with a high priest.

The identification of the BD as Lazarus again makes sense when we examine his appearances in chapters 19, 20 and 21. In 19.26 the BD takes Mary to his own home, implying that this home was in or near Jerusalem. In 11.18, the narrator provides the apparently insignificant detail that Bethany, where Lazarus lived, was "eggus tōn Ierosolumōn". This detail lends strength to the belief that it was Lazarus' home to

which Mary was taken. In 20.2f, the BD outruns Peter to the empty tomb. The reason why he outran Peter is not hard to see when one recalls that the BD was approaching the tomb of one who had raised him from death. Lazarus, indeed, feels no need to go inside the tomb to confirm his profound presentiment of the resurrection. It is enough for him to see the very death-garments which the narrator stresses that Lazarus was wearing in 11.44 (notice, in particular, the reappearance of the "soudarion" or head-cloth in 20.7). Finally, this identification of the BD makes excellent sense of the apparently scandalous unfairness of Jesus' will for the BD in comparison with his will for Peter in 21.18f. Peter has crucifixion in prospect whilst the BD has natural death promised instead. If the BD was Lazarus, then the BD would already have tasted death and this fact would make Jesus' decision against the BD's martyrdom less surprising. Furthermore, the identification of the BD as the resuscitated Lazarus would explain the rather puzzling belief reported in 21.23 that the BD was not going to die, for such a resuscitation might have led some to regard Lazarus as immortal.

Our proposition in this study is that the BD was Lazarus and that Lazarus was a follower of the historical Jesus and not a fictive, community symbol. It was his testimony about Jesus which John the presbyter fashioned into a gospel, and it was his profound Christological understanding which united a distinctive group of disciples. We learn in 7.3 of the existence of a group of disciples who lived in Judaea *during the time of Jesus' ministry*, and who were evidently not part of the Twelve highlighted by MARK (and subsequently highlighted by MATTHEW and LUKE). Jesus' brothers say to him, "Leave here and go to Judaea so that your disciples too may get a look at the works you are performing". Since most of the Twelve were Galileans, we

can only presume that this group of Judaeans was a separate group. That Lazarus figured in this group from its inception is quite likely if we recall that the BD was one of the two followers of John the Baptist who transferred their allegiances to Jesus in 1.37 (the narrator makes a point of saying that the Baptist was operating in Bethany when this happened (1.28) and we know from 11.1 and 12.1 that Bethany was Lazarus' home). Thus, there was in Judaea a group of disciples, separate from the Twelve and in which Lazarus must have become a key figure (because of Jesus' special relationship with him). This group was to form the nucleus and basis of what present-day scholarship has christened 'the Johannine community'. Its own centre at Bethany, possibly in Lazarus' house, may explain the focus on Jerusalem and Bethany in JOHN, and its leader's personal experience of new life after death may indicate why JOHN became the gospel of eternal life.

Returning then to the adoption scenario in John 19.25-27, it is our argument that Jesus gave his mother to Lazarus, "the one he loved", who in turn took her to Bethany (the place where Mary and the disciples say farewell to Jesus in Luke 24.50f) and who later testified to this fact (in the presence of the presbyter). In the light of this judgement, we cannot agree with those commentators who dismiss the adoption scenario in 19.26-27 as historically implausible. C.K. Barrett's commentary on John 19.25-27 is fairly typical in this respect. He dismisses the natural explanation of 19.25f. (i.e. that it is a "simple historical reminiscence due to the beloved disciple himself") on the grounds that "the presence near the cross of friends of Jesus is improbable"⁴⁷. Barrett opts instead for the view that the evangelist was here following "bad tradition"⁴⁸. In other words, convinced that there seems to be no great theological symbolism in the incident, and assured

that such an event is at the same time historically improbable, Barrett claims that the evangelist must have incorporated a suggestive item of tradition which was really invented rather than historical. However, there are very real problems with an argument like this. Barrett himself displays an uncharacteristic inconsistency when, after claiming that it is improbable that Jesus' family and friends would have been at the cross, he says later on that "it is not inconceivable that Jesus, as the head of the family...., should have made provision for the care of his mother after his death"⁴⁹. Now, either it is *improbable* that such an event occurred, or it is *conceivable*; it cannot be both! Furthermore, if the adoption scenario really WAS a piece of fiction, then for what ecclesiological purpose and in what context was it created? Barrett remains silent on this issue.

Stauffer's estimation of the historicity of John 19.25f provides a fair though somewhat general counter-argument to Barrett's scepticism. Speaking of the words from the cross in all four gospels, he asks "Are all these words historical?"⁵⁰ In defence of their historical probability, he cites scholars whose research has revealed that "at the place of execution crucified persons are often surrounded by relations, friends and enemies, and in the long and painful hours until their death have often said some word or other"⁵¹. The argument that the soldiers would not have allowed anyone near Jesus' cross is therefore mistaken. As a result, Stauffer regards it as by no means impossible that Jesus spoke the words which traditional accounts of the crucifixion preserved, including Jesus' words in 19.25f. Stauffer thus reconstructs the historical incident in 19.25f as follows: "Mary's presence at Golgotha is an act of confession. She confesses that she belongs to the community of the accursed one. That means cutting herself off from James and his

brothers who still hold aloof from Jesus. In the Palestine of antiquity that means for a woman complete lack of a home and of protection - at the very moment when, having already lost her husband, she is also losing her son, the son with whom she has especially close ties. Jesus knows this. A crucified man has the right to make testamentary dispositions, even from the cross. Jesus now makes use of this right and with the official formula of the old Jewish family law he places his mother under the protection of the apostle John"⁵².

All this shows that the fourth evangelist has drawn on a reliable source in his restrained description of the creation of a new family of faith at the foot of the cross. However, the matter is not so easily resolved as this, since it is often objected that the synoptic accounts of the crucifixion depict the women standing afar off, with no sign of any male disciples anywhere near the cross. Thus Haenchen remarks that the scene in 19.25-27 "is not only unknown to the synoptics, it is even impossible as they represent matters. They report only that women watch how Jesus was crucified from afar"⁵³. This, is, however, a simplification of the synoptic pictures. MARK mentions that the women were standing at a distance from Jesus *but only after his death* (15.40). This would not rule out the possibility of an incident such as the one depicted in John 19.25-27 since it occurs *before* Jesus' death. As Brown has said, "one can harmonise by claiming that during the crucifixion the women had stood close to the cross (John), but as death approached they were forced to move away"⁵⁴. Furthermore, the synoptic pictures of the death of Jesus do not rule out the presence of the BD since they are most concerned about the presence or absence of the Galilean Twelve (of which Lazarus was not, of course, a member). The presence of male disciples at the crucifixion should not be dismissed,

especially since Luke indicates that there were men who knew Jesus nearby ("gnōstōi" is masculine in Luke 23.49).

REDACTION.

Bultmann's claim that this scene is the evangelist's own composition because, "in the face of the Synoptic tradition" it "can make no claim to historicity"⁵⁵ is suspect. In his composition of the narrative pericope at 19.25, the fourth evangelist drew upon an oral or a written source which derived from Lazarus' eye-witness testimony and which was either omitted by the synoptic evangelists or unknown to them. What, then, was the evangelist's aim in incorporating this incident in such a central way into his passion account ? The only sure way of answering this question is by finding other familistic images in the fourth gospel which resonate with 19.25-27 and then establishing the network of meaning which such images suggest. The first of such images occurs in 1.11 where the narrator tells us that Jesus-the-Word came to his own home ("ta idia") but his own people ("οἱ ἰδιοὶ") did not receive or accept him ("paralambanein"). Verbal parallels with 19.25f immediately suggest themselves, for in 19.27 the narrator reveals that the BD received or accepted Mary ("lambanein") and took her to his own home/people ("ta idia"). The main point of 1.11 however is that Jesus is said to be rejected by the spiritual family of the Jews, his own people, in his own homeland. That the Jews in JOHN understand themselves as a kind of racial family is seen in the familistic language of chapter 8, where they claim to be "sperma Abraam" and "tekna Abraam", and where they claim that Abraham is their father.

The picture evoked in chapters 1-12 is therefore one in which Jesus comes to his own racial family (the Jews) but is subjected to

increasing hostility and rejection by them. The parenthesis in 7.5 indicates that Jesus was not only rejected by this vast racial family of Judaism but also by his particular, localised family. As the narrator puts it, "not even his brothers believed in him". In the first half of the gospel Jesus is consequently rejected by both his spiritual family of Judaism and by his own natural family in Nazareth. He becomes not only a stranger from heaven but a stranger on earth, isolated from all natural and earthly familial relationships by his insistence on his own unique familial relationship with God the Father (10.30). However, to all those who believe in him and who face a similar isolation from their racial and natural families (such as the man born blind in John 9), Jesus promises a new family and a new home. As the narrator puts it in the prologue, "all those who did accept him he empowered to become God's children. That is, those who believe in his name - those who were begotten, not by blood, nor by carnal desire, nor by man's desire, but by God" (1.12f). The new *home* which Jesus offers is the "oikia tou patros" (14.2), a place which Jesus promises his disciples that he will lead them to when he returns after his death in the form of the Paraclete. This home of the Father represents, for the Johannine community, a present ecclesiological and not a distant eschatological reality⁵⁶. It is because of this that Jesus can promise to his disciples in 14.18 that he will not leave them "orphanoi"! Jesus will adopt the BD at the Cross, and will not leave them vulnerable and homeless.

Jesus' coming leads to the breakdown of the family of Judaism, to a disruption of families and homelessness for his disciples, but also to the construction of a new family of faith defined by belief in Jesus. The destruction of the family of Judaism is depicted in 8.35 as homelessness for the Jews. In a very terse parable, Jesus warns the Jews

that "While no slave has a permanent place in the family, the son has a place there forever". The slave in this context is an individual symbol representing a collective entity - the Jews. The son is obviously Jesus. The family, by implication, is the body of people who constitute the true children of God. Jesus' brief parable is therefore a warning to the Jews that they are on the point of losing their spiritual home and family centring upon God the Father. That right will now be given to the disciples. To them, Jesus promises a new family which will understand itself as the "adelphoi" of Jesus and the true "tekna theou". However, this family will be born out of suffering, as yet another distinctive Johannine familistic image indicates. In 16.21 Jesus says, "When a woman is in labour, she is sad that her hour has come. But once the baby is born, her joy makes her forget the suffering, because a child has been born into the world!". This extraordinary parable demonstrates, in a most enigmatic manner, that the crucifixion will mark the birth of the true community of God, for the child in the parable represents the new family of the Father which emerges from Jesus' quasi-maternal sacrifice.

The verbal parallels between 16.21 and 19.25f. (the use of the words "woman" and "hour"⁵⁷) indicate that the Cross is supremely the place where God's old family is deconstructed and his new family is born. The cross in JOHN is the place of adoption, as we have already seen. It is the fulfilment in narrative of the promise made in discourse (14.18): "I will not leave you as orphans". The dramatic and indeed tragic character of JOHN's passion narrative is seen in the apostasy of the Jews in 19.15, for here they at last relinquish any right to be the children of God by claiming Caesar instead of Yahweh as king. But in this tragic rejection of their true king, the Jews unwittingly make the way clear for a new family, a true Israel, to replace the old

unbelieving Israel led by the chief priests and rulers. It is at this point, in 19.25-27, that the new family of faith emerges. At the Cross, Jesus establishes new relationships and a new community. By adopting the BD as his successor, Jesus establishes Mary and Lazarus as the human foci of the new spiritual family that can claim God as Father. It is at this point in JOHN that the Johannine community is presented with a legitimation of its origins through the poignant creation of a new family at the time of Jesus' death. Here the "cognitive dissonance"⁵⁸ of its fractured relationship with Judaism is resolved in the moving portrait of the adoption of Lazarus as a member of the family - the family of Jesus. Here earthly, natural ties are replaced by new familial relationships and a new home is created at Bethany, the "oikia tou patrou".

CHAPTER SEVEN.

SECTION THREE. JOHN 19.25-27 AS COMMUNITY NARRATIVE.

A number of recent studies have sought to demonstrate, both from an exegetical and a sociological basis, the disruption of families and the consequent loss of home which discipleship caused. Martin Hengel's CHARISMATIC LEADER AND HIS FOLLOWERS showed just how drastic following Jesus could be for the first disciples. As he put it, "decision for Jesus did not bring peace but disruption (diamerismos) to families" in a way that conflicted dramatically with Jewish law, piety and custom⁵⁹. Hengel argued that no adequate parallel to the special features of being a disciple of Jesus exists in any of the known, relevant sources. Instead, he proposed that Max Weber's sociological description of the charismatic-prophetic leader offers the most revealing insights into Jesus' character and demands. Weber had claimed that "those who are the bearers of the charisma - the master and his disciples and followers - must, if they are to do justice to their mission, stand outside the ties of this world, outside the everyday vocations and also outside the everyday family duties"⁶⁰. Hengel, in the light of this remark, attempted to rationalize the apparently severe Q saying, "Let the dead bury their dead" (Matthew 8.21//Luke 9.59), by describing Jesus as an eschatological charismatic whose mission required a dramatic disruption of family and a loss of home. Indeed, Hengel maintains that Jesus demanded freedom from family ties.

Gerd Theissen's thesis, A SOCIOLOGY OF EARLIEST CHRISTIANITY (1977), in many ways supplemented Hengel's 1968 essay in that it sought to describe in greater detail the sociological implications of Jesus' life as "wanderradikalismus". In Theissen's book, however, the focus is not so much on Jesus as the wandering charismatic but on those who

sought to carry the Christian revelation from place to place. Theissen painted a picture of the earliest Christian church as a large number of communities which were visited by wandering charismatics, who in turn became those communities' spiritual authorities. He points out that Jesus did not primarily found local churches but rather called into being a movement of wandering prophets who lived a homeless, nomadic existence. From the synoptics, it is clear to Theissen that their lives were characterised by HOMELESSNESS, LACK OF FAMILY, LOSS OF POSSESSIONS and LACK OF PROTECTION⁶¹. Howard Kee's COMMUNITY OF THE NEW AGE, published in the same year, went a stage further than this by showing that homelessness and loss of family were hallmarks of the communities as well as its charismatic leaders. Following Jesus, for both the Christian in the local community AND the wandering charismatic, required "a break with one group in which the individual finds his most important attachments and his true identity: the family"⁶². The need in the Christian communities was therefore for a "new concept of the true family"⁶³, and this - in Mark's Gospel - was achieved in the picture of the church as an eschatological family⁶⁴ (Mark 3.20f, 10.28f, et.al).

Perhaps the most detailed study of this phenomenon of homelessness in primitive Christianity is J.H.Elliott's sociological exegesis of I Peter entitled, A HOME FOR THE HOMELESS (1981). Elliott draws attention to some of the distinctive language of I Peter which helps us to situate the letter. The present existence of Christians is described in 1.17 as PAROIKIA or HOMELESSNESS⁶⁵. In the Graeco-Roman world, the PAROIKOS or PEREGRINUS was a resident alien permanently without rights of citizenship because of status by birth. Placing the actual social setting of the letter in central and Northern Asia Minor, Elliott draws on other historical data concerning rural labouring classes

to suggest that the language of PAROIKIA is more actual than figurative in I Peter⁶⁶. Homeless Christians founded sects, according to Elliott, whose group cohesion was strengthened by persecution (3.13-17, 4.12-19, 5.10). The purpose of I Peter was consequently to exhort the readers to remain resident aliens, not by offering some picture of a heavenly home, but by helping them to recognize the home which these Christians already possessed. The central ecclesiological image which the author used was therefore the image of the HOUSEHOLD, since it "supplied powerful social, psychological and theological symbols"⁶⁷. The idea of the church as the OIKOS of God was imaginative because it enhanced social cohesion, appealed to the universal experience of family life, and evoked "the common memory of and quest for home, companionship and a place of belonging"⁶⁸.

These four writers - Hengel, Theissen, Kee and Elliott - have succeeded in delineating the effect on family and home which primitive Christianity caused. They portray Jesus as a homeless, charismatic nomad who was forced by the nature of his mission to relinquish his natural family ties. They depict the post-resurrection authorities in the localised Christian communities as homeless prophets who cut themselves off from their families in obedience to (and imitation of) their Master. They describe the communities themselves as social groups in which conversion had resulted in the disruption of families and the loss of a sense of home. Above all, they show the writers of NT texts as sensitive and imaginative pastors who sought to reorient their flocks to a sense of true belonging by using *family* and *home* as potent ecclesiological images. Thus, Mark orients his readers to an awareness of their present existence as members of an eschatological family by reporting Jesus' statement that "whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister,

and mother" (3.35), and his promise that "there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life" (10.29-30). In other words, the second evangelist compensates for his reader's alienation by offering them a powerful, familial legitimation of their present existence.

That these sociological studies of NT texts have a bearing on John 19.25-27 can be borne out by citing one of Barrett's remarks on the passage in his commentary. He writes at one point that this creation of a new family of faith in 19.25-27 is an illustration of Christian unity, since "the Christian receives in the present age houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands (Mark 10.30)"⁶³. Barrett is not suggesting that John 19.25-27 is an allegorical illustration of the promise made by Jesus in Mark 10.30. Rather he is suggesting that the adoption scenario at the Cross is an *example* of that redefinition of family and home which the earliest Christian disciples had to face. This redefinition is particularly evident in 19.25-27 because Jesus' brothers, whom one would have considered the logical and natural guardians of Mary, are noticeable for their absence. The beloved disciple is chosen in preference to the brothers of Jesus. Indeed, he takes their place because he truly believes in Jesus whilst they only misunderstand him (7.5). Thus, faith in Jesus is the criterion for adoption into Christ's family, not natural kinship. Spiritual relationships within the new family of faith take priority over natural ties. The church is a family of faith, not of blood relationships.

So how would the first readers or hearers of JOHN's passion narrative have responded to this powerful little narrative about the adoption of the beloved disciple ? It is our contention that this narrative would have provided a forceful legitimation of the Johannine Christians' present existence and an effective consolation for the loss of family and home which they themselves had faced. There is evidence in JOHN that belief in Jesus - if overtly confessed - resulted in alienation from the family of Judaism and indeed from one's own family. The statement of the narrator in John 9.22 demonstrates this truth translucently. In this context, the parents of the man born blind refuse to cooperate with the synagogue authorities because they feared the Jews, because the Jews had already agreed that if any one should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be expelled from the synagogue. Why did the evangelist feel that it was necessary to include the parents at all ? The answer is first of all because they were present in his historical source. This much is suggested by the word "already" in 9.22, which indicates a degree of surprise on the evangelist's part that discipleship was causing disruption of families and excommunication even *during Jesus' ministry*. More importantly, however, the evangelist included the parents because the division between parents and children was a critical reality in the lives of those Christians for whom he was writing. Thus, the implied division of a family in John 9 would have been a focus of poignant identification for the gospel's first readers.

Just as the Johannine Christians would have identified with the disruption of a family in John 9, so they would have identified with the creation of a new family in John 19.25-27, especially since the BD seems to have been the central and originating figure in their communal history. John 19.25-27 therefore functioned as a familistic image which

enhanced the sense of religious belonging amongst Johannine Christians. Every religious community requires a group image if successful socialisation is to be achieved⁷⁰. The degree of social affiliation depends on the reality and relevance of the group image within the consciousness of the collectivity concerned. As Carrier puts it, "the image projected by a group plays a decisive role in strengthening the sense either of belonging or its rejection"⁷¹. Such group images are most frequently expressed in the form of a community narrative. As the Christian social ethicist Stanley Hauerwas puts it, "the form and substance of a community is narrative-dependent and therefore what counts as 'social ethics' is a correlative of the content of that narrative"⁷². As Hauerwas continues, "a people are formed by a story which places their history in the texture of the world. Such stories *make the world our home* (italics mine) by providing us with the skills to negotiate the dangers in our environment in a manner appropriate to our nature"⁷³. What we are suggesting in the context of John 19.25-27 is that this narrative creates a sense of "HOME" amongst Johannine Christians by showing that their fraternity derives from an act of love by Jesus himself at the Cross.

The psychosocial phenomenon of religious belonging is best achieved by the concentration upon and repetition of the images of family and home. This is particularly obvious in first century Jewish communities where religious affiliation was realised through the idea of a familial bond. As Bossman has argued, in much of the Judaism of this period, family terms and family-based symbols of tradition and authority were used in order to stabilize Judaism during a period of dangerous social unpredictability. In other words, the Pharisees used "the extended-family model" because it was "the safest and most effective

context for the practice and transmission of Judaism"⁷⁴. However, this characteristic of regarding the community as a family was not only confined to first century Judaism. As Anne Marie Ohler has shown, Jewish society from the earliest times composed family sagas designed to reinforce the sense of community identity, and these sagas were successfully passed on from generation to generation. Ohler gives some space to what she calls the "family saga". She shows how "the narratives collected in Genesis 12-50 represent the beginnings of the people of Israel in the guise of a family history", and how, from then on, stories emphasizing the family history of the community were treasured and repeated⁷⁵. Such parallels in Jewish stories both prior to and contemporary with JOHN suggest that 19.25-27 may well have acted as a kind of family history similar to those family sagas which the Jewish Johannine Christians treasured before their conversion - though of course John 19.25f is history, not saga.

The adoption narrative in John 19 therefore functions as a legitimation of the present family life of Johannine Christians. When we describe 19.25-27 as a "legitimizing narrative" we mean that it objectifies the kind of knowledge necessary for explaining and justifying the present social order of Johannine Christianity. Peter Berger has shown that such legitimations are necessary in community life because "not only children but adults as well 'forget' the legitimating answers. They must ever again be 'reminded'. In other words, the legitimating formulas must be repeated"⁷⁶. Berger goes on to add that *ritual* is the crucial instrument for 'reminding' society⁷⁷. This is interesting in the case of John 19.25f because it has often been argued that the passion narratives in all four gospels are precisely the kinds of story which would have been recited in the earliest Christian

liturgies. Trocme has stated that "the Sitz im Leben of the original Passion narrative...was...the liturgical commemoration of Christ's death by Christians during the Jewish Passover celebration"⁷⁸. Whether or not we agree that the first passion story or stories were only recited at Passover, the fact remains that the passion narratives in the gospels would have been used early on in liturgical settings. This liturgical function should caution us from neglecting the "primary oral situation" when assessing the artistry of JOHN. It should also warn us that the purpose of John 18-19 was, in part, to remind Johannine Christians of "legitimizing answers" *in a ritual context*.

In this chapter we have attempted to discover the nature of the first reader responses to John 18-19 and we have done this by using the core familistic image in John 19.25f as an example. In this chapter our aim has been to highlight the relationship between narrative and social identity in JOHN, and the way in which John 19.25-27 is composed not only for its historical value but also for its present sociological resonances. To Johannine Christians, no doubt facing the social and psychological bereavement of alienation from the family of Judaism as well as their own natural families, such an adoption narrative would have provided consolation. No doubt it would also have reinforced the authority both of the BD and his testimonies. But its primary function is to recreate the sense of family and home in a people faced with the crisis of metaphorical and actual homelessness. Put another way, with the liturgical recitation of John 19.25-27, Johannine Christianity would have constantly experienced a sense of what Winqvist calls "homecoming". In THE ACT OF STORYTELLING AND THE SELF'S HOMECOMING, Winqvist argues that "without a history or without a story there is very little that we can say about ourselves"⁷⁹. As he continues, "The story can be viewed as

an integrating structure that organizes our feelings and forms a sense of continuous identity. To live without a story is to be disconnected from our past and our future"⁸⁰. "Only in the imaginative extension of story or myth can the unfinished self approximate a homecoming"⁸¹. It is in the light of these thoughts that we propose the following, innovative thesis: *that the Johannine act of story-telling in John 19.25f results in the home-coming of the Johannine community.*

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER SEVEN.

1. See p.81 of this thesis.
2. C.K.Barrett, JOHN, p.439.
3. For a useful summary of the considerable interest which the Fathers and the Scholastics had in this text, see H.Langkammer's CHRIST'S LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT (JN 19.26-27) IN THE INTERPRETATION OF THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH AND THE SCHOLASTICS. Antonianum, 1968, vol.43. pp.99-109.
4. See D.Unger, THE MEANING OF JOHN 19,26-27 IN THE LIGHT OF PAPAL DOCUMENTS (Marianum 21, 1959, pp.186-221), C.P.Ceroke's MARY'S MATERNAL ROLE IN JOHN 19,25-27 (Marian Studies 11, 1960, pp.123-51) and A.Feuillet's LES ADIEUX DU CHRIST A SON MERE ET LA MATERNITE SPIRITUELLE DE MARIE (NRT 86, 1964, pp.469-89). These are just a small sample of the many works by Roman Catholic scholars in which the figure of Mary in 19.25f is given priority.
5. E.Haenchen, JOHN, vol.II, p.193.
6. B.Lindars, THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, p.573.
7. B.F.Westcott, JOHN, p.276, followed also by Lindars, who writes that "the piece takes the obviously appropriate theme of filial piety, and uses it creatively to suggest that the death of Jesus is not so much the end of his work as a new beginning" (ibid, p.580).
8. R.Schnackenburg, THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST.JOHN, vol.III, p.278.
9. E.C.Hoskyns, THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.631.
10. R.A.Culpepper, ANATOMY, p.122.
11. J.A.Grassi, THE ROLE OF JESUS' MOTHER IN JOHN'S GOSPEL: A REAPPRAISAL. p.73.
12. C.K.Barrett, ibid, p.459.
13. A.Maynard, THE ROLE OF PETER IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.539.
14. J.A.Grassi, ibid, p.72-3: "it was very important for the author of the Fourth Gospel to obtain credibility for his views by establishing a direct link with Jesus". "A line of succession in authentic teaching could be established only by making as close a connection as possible to Jesus". Having said that, Grassi moves on to emphasize the role of Mary as "remembering mother" and as intercessor: "perhaps the Johannine community considered Mary as continuing her function as a loving mother by offering their petitions to her son" (p.80). It is difficult to find justification in the text for these interpretations of Mary's role in 19.25f.
15. A.Dauer, DAS WORT DES GEKREUZIGTEN AN SEINE MUTTER UND DEN 'JUNGER DEN ER LIEBTE', BZ, 11. 1967. pp.222-39.

16. A.M.McWhinnie, ADOPTED CHILDREN. International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction. London. Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1967. p.36.

17. See R.Schnackenburg, *ibid*, p.278.

18. *Ibid*, p.278. C.K.Barrett, *ibid*, p.458, disagrees and argues that the words "ho huioi sou" recall "ancient formulae of adoption".

19. R.E.Brown, JOHN, vol.II, p.577. See also W.Grundmann's, ZEUGNIS UND GESTALT DES JOHANNES-EVANGELIUM, Arbeiten zur Theologie 7 (Stuttgart, Calwer Verlag, 1961): "The Son is the Revealer of the Father, the Beloved Disciple of the Son" (p.71).

20. John A.T.Robinson mentions Brownlee's view on p.98 of PRIORITY.

21. B.Lindars, *ibid*, p.579.

22. R.E.Brown, *ibid*, p.911.

23. B.F.Westcott, *ibid*, p.275.

24. R.H.Lightfoot, ST.JOHN'S GOSPEL, p.316.

25. E.C.Hoskyns, *ibid*, p.631. Lightfoot has copied Hoskyns' statement almost word for word.

26. R.Schnackenburg, *ibid*, p.278.

27. R.Bultmann, THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, p.673: "The mother of Jesus, who tarries by the cross, represents Jewish Christianity that overcomes the offence of the cross. The beloved disciple represents Gentile Christianity, which is charged to honour the former as its mother from whom it has come, even as Jewish Christianity is charged to recognize itself as "at home" within Gentile Christianity, i.e., included in the membership of the one great fellowship of the Church".

28. R.E.Brown, *ibid*, p.926: "Jesus' mother is the New Eve". Peter Ellis, THE GENIUS OF JOHN, p.271, sees Mary as "the woman of Gen.3.15".

29. P.Minear, THE BELOVED DISCIPLE IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, p.119. "Is Jesus here restoring to Rachel her son Benjamin ? Does Mary represent Jacob-Israel, with the midrashic corollary that this man is Jacob's best-loved son ?" Minear constructs this thesis on his belief that the fourth evangelist has constructed this farewell scene on the basis of a Moses-Benjamin typology (Benjamin is called "the beloved of the Lord", p.110). Minear offers all this as "a possible reading" and as "speculation" (p.122).

30. J.N.Sanders, ST.JOHN ON PATMOS, p.80.

31. J.A.T.Robinson tries - manfully - to get round this problem by arguing that "John's acquaintance with the girl on the gate and the high-priestly household derived from these commercial contacts and that he was more familiar with the tradesmen's entrance" (p.117).

32. The focus on Judaea and especially on Bethany and Jerusalem in JOHN is hard to explain if its author was one of the Galilean Twelve. However, if the BD was Lazarus, who lived at Bethany, then this distinctively Johannine, geographical emphasis is explained. The justification for believing that the BD was Lazarus is provided on pp.245f. of this chapter.

33. If the BD WAS John bar Zebedee, then he would have taken Mary home to Galilee from the time of the crucifixion. This comports poorly with the picture we have in the first chapter of Acts, where Mary and the disciples are still in Jerusalem at the time of the Ascension. However, if the BD was Lazarus (who lived at Bethany), then it would make perfectly good sense for Mary to have been in the area of Jerusalem at the time of the Ascension.

34. R.E.Brown has argued that elements of the Transfiguration tradition are present in JOHN (JOHN, vol.I, p.xcviii). However, Brown does not point us to passages in JOHN as support for this. He points only to passages where the agony in Gethsemane (omitted from John but present in the synoptics) is hinted at.

35. R.E.Brown, JOHN, vol.I, p.lxxxviii. Having made the point that "there is no NT evidence that John son of Zebedee was ever at Ephesus", Brown then goes on to state that "the Gospel was composed at Ephesus" (p.civ).

36. See Brown, *ibid*, p.lxxxix.

37. J.N.Sanders, ST.JOHN AT PATMOS, p.83.

38. See Brown, *ibid*, p.xc.

39. R.SCHNACKENBURG, THE ORIGIN OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL, writes: "In the beloved disciple we have to do with the authority behind the Johannine circle, a historical personage, a disciple of the Lord, who, however, was not one of the Twelve", p.239. See also R.E.Brown, COMMUNITY OF THE BELOVED DISCIPLE, p. 33.

40. O.Cullmann, JOHANNINE CIRCLE, p.75.

41. *Ibid*, p.75.

42. *Ibid*, p.75. JOHN mentions the Twelve twice, in 6.66-71 and 20.24.

43. *Ibid*, p.78.

44. John A.T.Robinson, PRIORITY, p.119, basing this designation on John 13.23f, where the BD is seen reclining on the bosom of Jesus.

45. This is a point well made by Verner Eller in THE BELOVED DISCIPLE, pp.23-26. Eller's book is a popular argument for an identification of the BD as Lazarus.

46. The anonymous disciple *must* be the BD here. He is called "allos mathetēs" as he is in chapter 20. He is a mediatorial figure between Peter (representative of the apostolic churches) and Jesus, as in 13.23f.

47. C.K.Barrett, *ibid*, p.458.
48. *Ibid*, p.455.
49. *Ibid*, p.459.
50. E.Stauffer, JESUS AND HIS STORY, London, SCM, 1960, p.111.
51. *Ibid*, pp.111-12.
52. *Ibid*, p.113..
53. E.Haenchen, *ibid*, pp.197-8.
54. R.E.Brown, *ibid*, vol.II, p.904.
55. R.Bultmann, *ibid*, p.673.
56. "My Father's house", to a Jewish mind, would have signified "heaven". This militates against my view that the phrase connotes, for the Johannine community, a present ecclesiological reality. However, the realised eschatology in the rest of the chapter, in particular the idea that Jesus will send the paraclete so that the disciples will not be left as orphans, suggests that this much-loved text is more complex. We are following O.Shaeffer here. In DER SINN DER REDE JESUS VON DEN VIELEN WOHNUNGEN IN SEINES VATERS HAUSE UND VON DEM WEG ZU IHM (Joh 14.1-7) (ZNW 32, 1933, 210-7), Shaeffer argues that the phrase "my Father's house" occurs in John 2.16 referring to the Temple. However, Jesus in that situation reinterprets the Temple as his own body - so that Jesus himself becomes the "oikia tou patros". The special home which Jesus is therefore promising his disciples in 14.1f is an "indwelling place" - a spiritual union with the Father in Jesus, and through the paraclete.
57. R.E.Brown, *ibid*, vol.II, p.925.
58. J.Gager, THE SOCIAL WORLD OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1975. p.43 and Robin Scroggs, SOCIOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE NT, p.173.
59. M.Hengel, CHARISMATIC LEADER AND HIS FOLLOWERS, p.13.
60. *Ibid*, p.34.
61. G.Theissen, A SOCIOLOGY OF EARLIEST CHRISTIANITY, pp.10-14.
62. H.Kee, COMMUNITY OF THE NEW AGE, p.89.
63. *Ibid*, p.89.
64. *Ibid*, p.109.
65. J.H.Elliott, A HOME FOR THE HOMELESS, p.14.
66. *Ibid*, p.39.

67. Ibid, pp.222-3.
68. Ibid, p.230.
69. C.K.Barrett, Ibid, p.459.
70. H.Carrier, THE SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS BELONGING, p.208.
71. Ibid, p.210.
72. S.Hauerwas, A COMMUNITY OF CHARACTER, p.10.
73. Ibid, p.15.
74. D.M.Bossmann, AUTHORITY AND TRADITION IN FIRST CENTURY JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY, p.5.
75. A.M.Ohler, STUDYING THE OLD TESTAMENT: FROM TRADITION TO CANON, Edinburgh, T & T.Clark, 1985. p.93.
76. P.Berger, THE SOCIAL REALITY OF RELIGION, p.31.
77. Ibid, p.40.
78. E.Trocme, THE PASSION AS LITURGY, p.82.
79. C.Winquist, THE ACT OF STORYTELLING AND THE SELF'S HOMECOMING, p.2
80. Ibid, p.2.
81. Ibid, p.9.

CHAPTER EIGHT. JOHN 18-19 AS NARRATIVE HISTORY.
SECTION ONE. THE TRUTH-VALUE OF JOHN 18-19.

We come finally to the complex question of the truth value of John 18-19. At the outset, it is important that we define what we mean by "truth value". The word "truth" has two particular facets which relate first to REFERENCE and secondly to MIMESIS'. When we speak of the referential truthfulness of JOHN we mean the historical accuracy of its narrative reconstruction of the words and works of Jesus. When we speak of its mimetic truthfulness, we are thinking much more of the abiding significance of this narrative for subsequent readers. Thus, the "truth" we are talking about in John 18-19 is both its historical accuracy (reference) and its universal significance (mimesis). The word "value" refers to the status of John 18-19 as an account of how Jesus of Nazareth died. If John 18-19 is both accurate as to its history (reference) and rich in significance (mimesis), then the truth-value of this narrative can be deemed very considerable. In this section we shall be examining the truth-value of the referential dimension to John 18-19. We shall attempt to do this by assessing the truth-claims implicit or explicit within the text, the historical probability of the incidents recorded within it, and the nature and reliability of the sources behind it. In the next section we shall be examining the truth-value of the mimetic dimension of John 18-19, and evaluating what profound meaning in Jesus' death is evoked through the peculiarly Johannine interpretation of this historical data.

a) TRUTH CLAIM.

The most overt truth-claim of the Johannine Passion Account is to be found in 19.34-35, which reads: "One of the soldiers stabbed his

side with a lance, and at once there was a flow of blood and water. This is vouched for by an eye-witness, whose evidence is to be trusted. He knows that he speaks the truth, so that you too may believe..." One cannot avoid the strength and the insistence of this claim to be a report of something which actually occurred. Indeed, it marks such an obvious intrusion and interruption in the narrative that some translations even put 19.35 in parentheses. What, then, are we to make of it ? Frank Kermode writes as follows: "Nowhere else in the gospels, so far as I know, are we so insistently urged to accept a narrative as a transparent account of historical fact"². From this judgement, however, Kermode concludes that the statement is just an aesthetic deception - a devious way of getting the reader to mistake the reality effect of the spear-thrust in 19.34 as an actual incident in history. The spear-thrust itself is an abnormality in procedure. As such, it appears as one of those rare fortuities which make the reader think, "This is so unusual, it MUST have happened!" Coupled with the assertion of veracity in 19.35, the incident assumes the kind of history-like realism which makes us believe it literally occurred. In reality, however, this "historical account is an invention". The spear-thrust is what Kermode describes as "a recondite figuration"³.

Kermode is very scathing towards those who say that "The verse about the veracity of the witness means exactly what it says. John provides an eye-witness account of the proceedings, and then passes on to suggest their deeper meanings..."⁴ As far as Kermode is concerned, John 19.34 has no "transparence upon historical fact"⁵. But is this view correct ? It is interesting to note that C.H.Dodd, with whom Kermode frequently takes issue in the GENESIS OF SECRECY (as we shall see later), actually allows the possibility that such "vivid dramatic

traits" as these could, in the final analysis, be due to the "literary skill" of the evangelist⁶. However, Dodd does not make this his last judgement. He went on to add that "I cannot think that the plain statement, *o eōrakōs memarturēken*, with the solemn asseveration of its truth, can reasonably be treated as a plain falsehood"⁷. As Dodd continues, "I can see no reasonable way of avoiding the conclusion that the evangelist intends to assure his readers that his account rests, whether directly or indirectly, on the testimony of an eyewitness. Not only so, he formally affirms that the testimony is genuine (*alēthinē*) and that the witness must be believed to be a veracious witness (*ōti alēthē legei*)"⁸. As for the identity of the witness, Brown rightly comments: "There can be little doubt that in the writer's mind this eyewitness was the Beloved Disciple mentioned in vss.26-27"⁹. This means that the whole account of the crucifixion has a strong claim to referential truth, since the BD is present throughout.

The author's truth-claim for the crucifixion narrative in John 19.16b-42 is therefore a very strong one. Kermode's scepticism about it is based entirely on an insupportable presupposition: that the fourth evangelist, like a modern novelist, deploys reality effects in his passion narrative in order to achieve a history-likeness which the reader will confuse with actual history. This, of course, is anachronistic since none of the evangelists employ such semiotic strategies characteristic of modern fiction. A much more reasonable argument against the truth-claim in 19.35 would be that the BD appears to leave the vicinity of the Cross *before* the spear-thrust in 19.27 ("from that hour, the disciple took her into his own home")¹⁰. However, the word "hora" in verse 27 is not supposed to mean "that instant", but rather "the time of Jesus' return to the Father" (as in 13.1). This

would mean that the BD was certainly still present up until the moment Jesus died. Consequently, it seems that there is every reason to believe the truth-claim of 19.35 and to recognize the referential truth-value of 19.16-42. As for the first and second sections of the Passion Account (18.1-27 and 18.28-19.16a), we should recall that the evangelist portrays the BD as in the vicinity of the arrest, the denials of Peter and the interrogation before Annas and that this constitutes an *implicit* truth-claim for the first section. For the trial narrative, other considerations need to be borne in mind, since the BD is not visible and the narrator makes no explicit truth-claim for this section.

b) PROBABILITY.

There are a number of incidents in the Johannine passion account which scholars have frequently suggested are historically improbable. The following is a sample list: (1) there was no "speira" or cohort in 18.3, since that would have involved an absurd number of men, and in any case the Romans would not have been involved in the arrest; (2) the soldiers did not fall down when Jesus identified himself in 18.6; (3) the two men in 18.10 were not Peter and Malchus; (4) Annas was not high priest; (5) the BD would not have known Annas (18.15); (6) there was no private interrogation before Annas since the Synoptic accounts omit it altogether; (7) the dialogue between Pilate, Jesus and the Jews did not occur as the evangelist describes it since there was no witness like the BD, and in any case some of the language - especially 18.36-37 - is too Johannine; (8) the Sanhedrin did have authority to put people to death (18.31) and there was no passover amnesty such as is invoked by Pilate in 18.39; (9) Jesus was not flogged in the middle of his trial (19.1-3) but before execution (as in the Synoptics); (10) the seamless tunic is

an item invented in order to harmonize the division of garments with prophecy (19.23-24); (11) friends of Jesus would not have been allowed near the Cross; (12) Jesus was not crucified when the passover lambs were being slaughtered in the Temple (19.31); (13) there was no effusion of blood and water as reported in 19.34; (14) the burial of Jesus did not involve Nicodemus, nor the excessive amounts of embalming ointments.

Most of these charges of historical improbability have been challenged and undermined, notably by C.H.Dodd, Raymond Brown, Reginald Fuller and John A.T.Robinson¹¹. It would be impossible in the limited space here to repeat *all* the apologies for historical plausibility which have been put forward in the recent defences of JOHN's historicity, but it is important to note that an incident such as the private, nocturnal interrogation before Annas, which was formerly supposed to be unhistorical, is now seen by most commentators as being of some historical value because it fills in lacunae implicit in the parallel synoptic accounts¹². Some other charges of improbability are less adequately answered because they are not necessarily patient of a scientific defence. For example, attempts to defend the display of divine power in 18.6 and the effusion of blood and water in 19.34 come across as "special pleading" because they necessarily depend on a prior belief in the divinity of Jesus and in supra-rational occurrences¹³. At the same time, however, attempts to dismiss them are equally unconvincing because they begin with the assumption that Jesus was not divine and that such things as the effusion of water from a dead body could never occur. What may swing the balance in the favour of historicity is the fact that Johannine scholars have, in recent years, shown how archeological and literary factors support rather than threaten the historicity of texts such as JOHN's passion narrative.

That being the case, it is still true that the historicity of JOHN's trial narrative (18.28-19.16a) is particularly difficult to prove because it is a passage which exhibits a high degree of dramatic artistry, and because it is hard to see how anyone with any influence on JOHN's passion tradition could have been an eye-witness. However, a recent article by F.F. Bruce has revealed, on literary and historical-critical grounds, that the trial procedure delineated in this section coincides in a remarkably accurate way with what we know of pertinent Roman judicial procedures. Taking Sherwin-White's ROMAN SOCIETY AND ROMAN LAW IN THE NEW TESTAMENT and Mommsen's classic ROMISCHES STRAFRECHT as his sources, Bruce contends that the following items of John 18-19 are most probably based on good historical tradition: the part of the Romans in the arrest, the Jews' lack of capital jurisdiction, the procedure adopted by Pilate in the trial, the Passover amnesty, the scourging of Jesus BEFORE his sentence, the horse-play by the soldiers, the charges of Kingship and blasphemy, the accusation that Pilate is not "Caesaris amicus", the use of nails in the crucifixion, the crucifragium, and finally the division of Jesus' clothes by the soldiers. At every point, the judgement is strengthened that "John's framework for the Roman trial is judicially accurate, though he fills it in with theological as well as historical content (the theological interpreting the historical)"¹⁴. Our conclusion concurs with Bruce's in that we see John 18.28-19.16a not as a dramatic, theological fiction but an interpretative elaboration of a source-narrative which is both primitive and historically reliable. JOHN's trial narrative is certainly narrative Christology, but it is narrative Christology based on historical data.

c) SOURCE.

The question of the historical value of JOHN's Passion Account is very largely dependent on what kind of source material the evangelist was using, and how extensively he altered it. The opinions concerning both these matters vary considerably. One bone of contention is whether the evangelist inherited fragments of traditional material or a continuous passion narrative. Maurice Goguel opts for the former in his SOURCES DU RECIT JOHANNIQUE DE LA PASSION (1910). He argues that John 18-19 is composed of (i) primitive passion material which circulated independently from the Synoptic traditions, (ii) passion material which is Synoptic in character but which was developed and elaborated before incorporation into the Fourth Gospel, and (iii) fragments included by a redactor¹⁶. C.H. Dodd (1963), however, contends that the fourth evangelist must have inherited a continuous passion narrative. He allows the possibility that "two or three of the incidents which now appear in the course of that narrative were handed down separately", but he goes on to suggest that "for the most part each incident is intelligible only in its place within the continuous sequence, depending on what has gone before and preparing for what comes after"¹⁶. In direct opposition to Goguel, Dodd argues that "the attempt to explain the Passion Narrative as an aggregation of originally independent units is fundamentally misguided"¹⁷. What the fourth evangelist inherited was a complete narrative formed very early in the life of the Church.

Of the two positions described above, that of C.H. Dodd seems the more plausible. In a largely Jewish context, there must have been a need in the earliest preaching to explain how a crucified Jew could also have been the Messiah. As Lindars has pointed out, such a "passion apologetic" in the primitive kerygma must have led very quickly to the

development of a continuous passion story¹⁸. Furthermore, such a continuous story would have been required in the celebration of the Christian passover in the years after Jesus' death and resurrection, as an elaboration of and substitute for the traditional haggadah. The actual contours of this story are hard to discern, but it is interesting to note that Taylor, Bultmann and Jeremias have all reached a similar view of the primitive passion account behind MARK, but using different methodologies¹⁹. Taylor's primitive account consists of: (1) Jesus going out to the Mount of Olives, (2) The Arrest of Jesus, (3) A nocturnal hearing before the Sanhedrin, (4) A morning hearing before the Sanhedrin, (5) The accusation against Jesus by the chief priests before Pilate, (6) Pilate delivering Jesus up for crucifixion, (7) Simon of Cyrene, the offer of drugged wine, the crucifixion, the division of garments, (8) The inscription above the Cross, (9) The mockery by passers by, (10) The cries from the cross and the offer of wine, (11) The centurion's exclamation, (12) Joseph's request to Pilate²⁰. Something similar to this may well lie behind John 18-19, though JOHN omits Simon of Cyrene, the mockeries, the initial offer of drugged wine and the centurion's confession.

Scholars are divided when it comes to the length and detail of JOHN's passion source. By distinguishing between tradition and redaction, Howard Teeple discerns source material in 18.3, 4b-5a, 6a, 10b, 12, 13b, 19 and 22 in Section One, 19.1-5a and 19.12-13a in Section Two, and finally 19.14b-17a, 18-19, 21-24a, 25b, 28-30, 40-42 in Section Three²¹. This material does not, however, make up a continuous narrative since - to take one example - there is no transition from Annas to Pilate. Robert Fortna's reconstruction of the Vorlage behind John 18-19 is more comprehensive. Fortna sees the following in the original

narrative: 18.1-4, 10-12, 13, 24, 15-16a, 19, 20, 21, 22-23, 16b-18, 25b-28a, 28b, 33, 37-38, 19.15, 18.39-40, 19.6, 12, 13-14a, 1-3, 16a, 16b-19, 20, 23-24, 28-30, 25, 31-34, 36-38, 3.1, 19.39-42 (in this order)²². This leaves us with a picture of an evangelist who has displaced parts of his source and who has added the following material:

- (i) Jesus' demonstration of his divinity and shepherdly love in 18.5-9;
- (ii) The reminder of Caiaphas' status and his unconscious prophecy (18.14);
- (iii) The initial confrontation between Pilate and the Jews (18.29-32);
- (iv) Pilate's initial confrontation with Jesus (18.33-36);
- (v) The "Behold the Man!" scene (19.4,5);
- (vi) The authority of Jesus (19.7-11);
- (vii) "Here is Your King!" (19.14b);
- (viii) The complaint of the Jews about the titulus (19.21-22);
- (ix) Jesus' words to his mother and the BD (19.26-27);
- (x) The completion motif (19.28a/30a);
- (xi) The effusion of blood and water and its apologia in 19.34b-5.

In Fortna's source analysis, it is evident that the evangelist has added material which relates to his understanding of Jesus as God, as Shepherd and as King (18.5-9, 18.33-36, 19.4-5, 19.7-11, 19.14b), material which falls under the category of clarificatory information (18.14 and 19.31), material which explains why the Jews brought Jesus to Pilate (18.29-32), material which relates to the Johannine community (19.26-27), and material which looks like overt authorial interpolation (19.35). In response to Fortna's thesis, we would want to ask a number of questions. First of all, why does Fortna dismiss wholesale material which is Christological (such as 18.5-9) ? Some source material must have acted as the catalyst for this understanding. Secondly, on what grounds can Fortna say that 19.21-22 "interrupts the flow of the story" and therefore constitutes a redactional addition ?²³ The Jew's complaint concerning the titulus is entirely logical in the narrative as it now

stands. Thirdly, how can Fortna dismiss 19.26-27 and 19.34b when both are well attested by the BD ? If the BD had a major influence on the Johannine passion tradition (which is probable), then surely the evangelist's source would have contained these incidents.

These questions aside, Fortna has achieved impressive results in his determination of the narrative source behind John 18-19, and we agree that the evangelist has reworked a written source with great artistry. However, one question does remain and that is the relationship between the passion source behind John 18-19 and the traditions behind the passion narratives of the synoptic gospels. The most likely solution is that John 18-19 is based on a tradition which has existed independently from the pre-Synoptic passion traditions and yet which has some parallels with them²⁴. This can be seen if we take the Johannine crucifixion account and compare it with the parallel Synoptic narratives. Looking at John 19.16b-30, we find the following details in the following order²⁵: (a) Jesus is crucified, (19.17) (b) between two criminals (19.18); (c) The royal inscription is fastened above his head (19.19-20); (d) The Jews object to the titulus (19.21-22); (e) Jesus' garments are divided (19.23-24); (f) Jesus adopts the BD (19.25-27); (g) Jesus utters his last words and dies (19.28-30).

The Markan Passion Narrative has a, b, c and e, but it has them in the order, a - e - c - b (crucifixion - division of clothes - titulus - the two criminals). Mark also has details which are not mentioned in John 19.16b-30: he has Simon of Cyrene, Jesus' refusal of drugged wine, abuse from bystanders, the darkness over the land, the cry of dereliction, the rending of the Temple curtain and the Centurion's confession.

Of JOHN's details, MATTHEW has a, b, c, e, but in the order a - e - c - b, exactly the same as we find in MARK. MATTHEW also has those seven details (from Simon of Cyrene to the Centurion's confession) which are found in the Markan crucifixion narrative but which are absent from JOHN. He has these seven items in exactly the same order as MARK. The only additions to MARK's narrative are minor details (such as the soldiers sitting down beneath the Cross to keep watch, and the cosmic reverberations of the crucifixion).

LUKE's parallel account has a, b, c and e but in the order, a - b - e - c (or, possibly b - a - e - c, if one gives priority to the initial reference to the two criminals in Luke 23.32) - i.e. different from both MATTHEW, MARK and JOHN. LUKE shares with MATTHEW and MARK the following details which are absent in JOHN: Simon of Cyrene, the offer of sour wine, abuse from bystanders, darkness over the land, the rending of the Temple curtain, and the centurion's confession. Absent in LUKE is the cry of dereliction which we find in MARK and MATTHEW. However, LUKE also has details which are not to be found in any of the other three gospels: the lamenting daughters of Jerusalem, Jesus' prayer of forgiveness, the scornful and the penitent thief, the prayer of commendation, and the repentant crowd.

What conclusions can we draw from this ? First of all, it seems likely that MARK has built on his primitive passion account with material from other sources and with comments of his own. Vincent Taylor claims that MARK adds the temporal coordinate in 15.25, the crucifixion of the two criminals in 15.27, the mockeries in 15.31-32, the darkness in 15.33, the rending of the Temple curtain in 15.38²⁶. Secondly, MATTHEW has followed MARK very closely and added extra details from his special source and from his own hand. Thirdly, LUKE may have followed

either MARK's or MATTHEW's accounts (or both) but he has also included a considerable amount of material from his own source (usually designated "L"). Fourthly, it seems most likely that JOHN has used a written, narrative passion source which is similar to the pre-Markan source but which has existed independently from it. JOHN has no Simon of Cyrene, no mockery by the passers-by, no cry of dereliction, no centurion's confession (all of which Taylor has in the primitive, pre-Markan source), and this further supports the independence of JOHN's source. Fifthly, it seems most unlikely that the fourth evangelist knew the Synoptic passion accounts in their final written form. If he had, he would have included, for example, the darkness over the land and the rending of the Temple Curtain, which would have formed fitting climaxes to a gospel preoccupied with light and darkness, and with the fractured relationship between Jesus and the Jews. Sixthly, JOHN has added material from his own special source, the eye-witness tradition of the beloved disciple which we designated J1 in chapter one. This includes 19.20-22, 19.26-27 and 19.34b. 19.20-22 was probably in the original source, but 19.25-27 and 19.34b may have been added later by the evangelist, who regarded them as authentic tradition.

CONCLUSIONS:

Taking truth-claim, probability and sources together, we are left with an impressive argument for the referential truth-value of John 18-19. Of the truth-claim in 19.35, Boice says: "As an apostle the witness who saw these things bears witness, not only to the surprising issue of water and blood from the side of the expired Lord, but to the entire scene..."²⁷ Of the probability of details in John 18-19, Brown says: "If plausibility is any guide, at times these Johannine details

give just as plausible a picture as do the...different details of the Synoptic tradition"²⁸. On the question of sources, Dodd says, "All four evangelists felt themselves to be bound by a pre-canonical tradition in which the broad lines of the story were already fixed"²⁹ - which means that John 18-19 is heavily based on a primitive, written passion tradition. All this adds up to the conclusion that John 18-19 preserves a tradition about the last 24 hours of Jesus' life which is trustworthy. Having said that, one cannot avoid the fact that this tradition has been interpreted and recast with a high degree of narrative artistry. When the evangelist depicts the reaction of the arresting party in 18.6 ("they fell to the ground"), we cannot regard this as a completely transparent window onto history. The evangelist probably knew of an incident in his passion source which spoke of the disarming boldness of Jesus in the face of his arresters. Possibly the source even witnessed to the arresting party being "floored" by such a display of courage³⁰. What the evangelist does is he recasts the story using dramatic hyperbole in order to emphasize the theme of Jesus' divinity. In this, as in every other case, the evangelist's method has been to to evoke truth from historical incidents, and not to create incidents to illustrate truth.

CHAPTER EIGHT.

SECTION TWO. NARRATIVE CHRONOLOGY AND NARRATIVE CHRISTOLOGY IN JOHN 18-19.

In chapter one we described the fourth gospel as narrative Christology, and in the last section we examined the historical traditions on which this narrative interpretation of Jesus was constructed. The position we have adopted in relation to this historical foundation is one which owes much to certain British scholars of the fourth gospel who, since Westcott, have sought to defend the referential truth-value of JOHN. In many ways we stand close to the views of J. Armitage Robinson's HISTORICAL CHARACTER OF ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL (1929). In this work, Robinson contested the prevailing opinion that the fourth evangelist, intent on displaying a particular conception of Jesus, "gave full play to his imagination and constructed situations, characters, and conversations to serve his didactic purpose"³¹. He objected to this view on the grounds that it is precisely the concrete historical reality of Jesus (I John 1ff) which made Christianity distinctive and which formed the basis for its claim to be truth. Thus, although Robinson believed that the evangelist had "coloured" and "modified" his historical traditions, he did not concede that JOHN is a work of fiction. As he put it: "It is one thing to recognize a strong personal element in the construction of a narrative, and especially of a narrative in which dialogue plays a part; it is quite another thing to suppose that incidents have been created for the sake of the instruction they are to convey"³².

Recent scholarship on the presentation of Jesus in the fourth gospel has also emphasized the historical foundation upon which the gospel's Christology has been constructed. Moody Smith, writing of "John's unique metahistorical presentation of Jesus"³³ in 1977, argues

that the Jesus of JOHN is "the Jesus of the past, who lived and worked in first century Palestine among his fellow Jews"³⁴. Even the historical experience of the Johannine community has failed to obliterate this historical foundation. As Smith puts it, Jesus' "conflicts with his contemporaries have been overlaid, but not lost, in the portrayal of him as the origin of his community's struggle with the synagogue"³⁵. JOHN's Christology is "based upon the historic work of Jesus of Nazareth, interpreted and refracted in the community's tradition and in the Gospel"³⁶. This is also true in John 18-19, for, in the account of Jesus' death "one is, on the one hand, made cognizant of the overarching cosmic and historic frame in which that death is overcome; but, on the other, not allowed to forget that it was a real, historic death of a human being"³⁷. In other words, in John 18-19 the true nature of Jesus and the profound significance of his death are evoked from facts and not from some mythical imagination. This does not mean, however, that John 18-19 is a literal account of events, for "although John doubtless contains chronological and topographical material worthy of historical scrutiny, it presents a picture which...can be regarded as historical in only the most rarified sense of the word"³⁸.

Smith's last remark may be judged to be somewhat extreme in the light of the recent resurgence of respect for the historical-referential aspect of JOHN, and yet at the same time he has highlighted a problem which we need to consider here. The truth is that John 18-19 cannot and should not be regarded as a completely transparent window onto the last 24 hours of Jesus' life. In all three sections of the passion narrative, the evangelist is doing far more than just reporting words and actions. He is interpreting these historical words and actions in such a way as to bring out Christological truths which he believes are intrinsic to

them. Thus, for example, he tells the story of the arrest of Jesus in 18.1-9 in order to underline the belief advanced in chapter 10 that Jesus is the Good Shepherd. This leads him to depict Jesus' position in the garden and Judas' approach to the garden in such a way that narrative echo effects are achieved with the protective shepherd figure and the destructive "kleptēs" in 10.1f. Similarly, in his story of the trial of Jesus, the evangelist uses dialogue and action as a dramatic way of communicating the truth that Jesus is king. Thus the statements of both Pilate and Jesus explore the finer dimensions of Jesus' kingship, whilst the actions of Pilate and the soldiers suggest an ironic presentation, investiture, reception, proclamation and enthronement of Jesus³⁹. Finally, the evangelist tells his story of the death of Jesus in order to bring out the truth, through chronology and allusion, that Jesus is the true Paschal lamb.

In the three sections of the passion narrative, therefore, the evangelist is using his historical source in order to express belief in Jesus as Good Shepherd, king and Paschal lamb. He achieves this by using the language of concrete reference in order to suggest a mimetic dimension which has universal application. A good example of this at work is the Johannine construction of a "passover plot"⁴⁰ in his gospel and in his passion narrative too. This passover plot is achieved through allusion and chronology. For example, the evangelist describes the stick on which the soldier lifts up a sponge soaked in vinegar as HYSSOPOS, the use of which (for offering vinegar to the dying Jesus) is somewhat incongruous. Some scholars deny that hyssop was used on manuscript grounds⁴¹ and on the grounds that the Palestinian variety could not have borne the weight of a wet sponge⁴². However, Brown observes that "at least eighteen different plants have been suggested as

answering its description"⁴³, so it is not impossible that we have an historical reminiscence here. But why, then, does the evangelist go to the trouble of telling us that this object was a hyssop branch ? Brown again sheds light on proceedings by stating that "the mention of hyssop...should probably be explained in terms of theological symbolism. Exod 12.22 specified that hyssop was to be used to sprinkle the blood of the paschal lamb on the doorposts of the Israelite homes"⁴⁴. This indicates that the evangelist is not only interested in the HYSSOPOS as a fact in history. He is also interested in it as a symbol suggesting an identification between Jesus and the Paschal lamb.

However, it is important to note the dissimilarity as well as the similarity between the HYSSOPOS of 19.29 and the HYSSOPOS of Exodus 12.22 if we are to understand the Johannine hermeneutic. The dissimilarity is, in reality, as striking as the similarity, for the action of sprinkling lamb's blood on doorposts could not really be less like the action of the soldiers responding to Jesus' thirst. This leads one to suspect that the evangelist's identification of the reed as a hyssop branch is not an invention on his part, motivated by a theological understanding of Jesus' death as the supreme paschal sacrifice. There is something uncomfortable about the notion that the hyssopos used by the soldiers resembles the hyssop used by the elders of Israel. This would make the vinegar of John 19.29 symbolize the blood of the passover lamb in Exodus 12.22 (which would mean, in effect, that Jesus was drinking his own blood), and the Gentile soldiers identifiable with the elders of Israel. In the absence of any coherent symbolism surrounding the hyssop here, we must conclude that the evangelist saw a detail in his historical source which he regarded as resonant but he was content to leave it that. He was not preoccupied with establishing a

thoroughly consistent network of symbols. He uses this same strategy in connection with the crucifragum, which recent discoveries have proved NOT to be the abnormality in procedure which Kermode supposes. He links this historical detail with the prohibition against breaking the lambs' bones in Exodus 12, as he seems to admit in the Scripture citation in 19.37⁴⁵. It is through such paschal allusions that the evangelist creates a *passover plot* in which the story of the death of Jesus is seen as the ultimate Passover sacrifice.

However, it is not only "allusion" but also chronology which helps to set up this passover plot. It is quite possible that Wilhelm Wilkens is right in seeing a passover framework in the gospel as a whole⁴⁶. This has been taken up by a number of scholars who agree that the three references to the Passover festival at 2.13, 6.4 and 11.55 reveal the key to JOHN's chronology and to the main unifying theme of the gospel. J.K.Howard argues that "the writer seems to be concerned with presenting Jesus as the perfect Paschal Victim", and shows how this paschal theme is focussed in the Lamb of God acclamation (1.29-34), the cleansing of the Temple (2.13-25), the feeding of the multitude (6.1-14 and 6.22-71), the farewell discourses and the passion narrative⁴⁷. Leon Morris, taking issue with Aileen Guilding's thesis that JOHN has been composed under the influence of the Jewish lectionaries, nevertheless agrees that "the most important clue to this aspect of the Gospel is the centrality of the Passover"⁴⁸. As far as the passion narrative is concerned, Howard argues that it is here that "John sees the whole of this Passover symbolism reaching its great climax"⁴⁹. As Howard concludes, "the new Paschal Victim is led to the place of slaughter at the very moment when the priests are immolating the sacrificial lambs in the Temple (19.14). Just as the blood of the sacrificial victims was

poured out, so also is the blood of Christ poured forth (19.34), the symbol of the new covenant of deliverance which this death ratified, and like the Paschal victim no bone of His body was broken"⁵⁰.

In his construction of a passover plot to JOHN, the evangelist has, to put it tersely, used *narrative chronology to establish narrative Christology*. That this is an evocation of a meaning intrinsic to the events *as the evangelist sees them* is a much-debated problem, but my feeling is that Anne Jaubert may be right when she argues that the evangelist was basing his chronology on a calendar different from the one influencing the synoptic passion narratives. She argues that JOHN has the crucifixion on 14th Nisan (the day of Preparation) whilst the synoptics have it a day later because JOHN was following a heterodox Jewish calendar which was used at Qumran⁵¹. The route which Jaubert uses in order to reach this conclusion is, admittedly, tortuous⁵², but it is nonetheless fair to say that she has presented a good case for the evangelist's use of a calendar which placed the crucifixion a day after the date given in the pre-synoptic passion traditions. At the very least she has managed to demonstrate how there was more than one calendar in the world of late first century Palestine, and how it is therefore more accurate to speak of the evangelist's use of an existing calendar instead of his invention of a Passover chronology. As Leon Morris points out, at the time of JOHN's composition there was more than one calendar in use among the Jews and the evangelist has used his calendar with great effect⁵³. As Morris states, "There can scarcely be any doubt but that John wants us to see Christ as the perfect Passover sacrifice. All the more is this the case in that when he wrote his Gospel the division between Jews and Christians seems to have been wide. The Christians, accordingly, could scarcely have had anything to do with the observance

of the Jewish Passover. In other words Christ's death was the Passover sacrifice which fulfilled all that Passover signified. Henceforth there was no need and no place for the annual sacrifice"⁵⁴.

The treatment of these aspects of the narrative of John 18-19 supports our thesis that the fourth evangelist does not invent incidents to illustrate spiritual meanings, but rather elicits spiritual meanings with inspired sensitivity from selected facts in his historical traditions. What this means, however, is that the narrative of John 18-19 is not only a window onto the last hours of Jesus' ministry, but also a window onto the meaning of Jesus Christ and his death for all readers of the gospel. This leads us to the question of the mimetic truth-value of John 18-19. In his HISTORICAL JESUS IN THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN, Franz Mussner attempts to define, from the gospel itself, the way in which the evangelist writes history. He does this through the Johannine use of the verbs "to see", "to hear", "to come to know", "to know", "to testify", "to remember"⁵⁵. After examination of the Paraclete passages, and also the passages incorporating the beloved disciple, Mussner concludes that the originating eye-witness behind JOHN is "a charismatic interpreter of Christ's history"⁵⁶. As Mussner puts it, "The Johannine mode of vision is that of a believing and informed witness who, in remembrance, "sees" his subject, Jesus of Nazareth, in such a way that the latter's hidden mystery becomes "visible" and expressible for the Church in the kerygma"⁵⁷. The truth-value of John 18-19 therefore consists in the fact that its presentation of Jesus is "meta-historical" as well as historical. JOHN gives us mimesis as well as reference in his story of the death of Jesus Christ.

In the first section of this chapter we established that the referential, historical value of John 18-19 can by no means be

dismissed. The truth-claim which the evangelist makes for it, along with the plausibility of its episodes and the soundness of its source mean that it is, in at least some sense, a reliable account of Jesus' death. In this section we have moved on to look at the mimetic truth-value of John 18-19; that is, the truth-value of its understanding of the identity of Jesus and the meaning of his death. It is important to be clear what we are claiming in this second section. When we speak of the mimetic truth-value of John 18-19, we are using the word "mimesis" in a particular way. Most people, when they read the word "mimesis", translate it with some phrase like "imitation of reality". They then work with the assumption that a mimesis of reality is an exact copy of something in the real world. This is not, however, what Aristotle originally intended. MIMESIS in Aristotle denotes the representation of an action which has paradigmatic and even universal application (such as the tragedy of Oedipus)⁵⁰. For John 18-19 to have mimetic truth-value, therefore, it must be seen that its action has universal significance for its readers. This is exactly what we are suggesting. John 18-19 depicts Jesus as the Shepherd who protects, the King who reigns, and the Lamb who atones, and all of these actions are as true of the Christ who lives today in His Church as they were when he lived EN SARKĒ. In short, they are recognized in the experience of the believer as truthful and indeed eternal images.

In the light of this understanding of narrative mimesis, it becomes clear that John 18-19 is not a transparent window onto the death of Jesus in which every detail of that event is meticulously described. For John 18-19 to be such a window, the narrative time would have to be equal to the story-time; that is, the time it would take to read the narrative would have to be the same as the time recorded IN the story

(about 24 hours). Even then, however, we could not rely upon the narrative being a completely objective transcript of events because it would only represent one possible point of view of the passion. No one narrative portrayal of the passion and death of Jesus could exhaust all the possible view-points, which is why the evangelist admits in Jn 21.25 that the world could not contain the number of books which *could* have been written about Jesus. Like Shakespeare in his dramatic histories, the fourth evangelist has had to be selective⁵⁹. In Henry V, Shakespeare admits that he has had to "omit all the occurrences" of many other important historical events because he has had to compress his material into the short two hours traffic of his drama. Thus, what he offers is not an exact facsimile of an historical individual or of historical events, but nor is it an "historical fiction", since - especially in the case of plays like Henry VIII - "the history he treated was too familiar to too many people for him to be able to distort it, even had he wished to do so"⁶⁰. What Shakespeare offers his public is dramatic history, and he humbly prays to his audience that they would forgive him for not including the "time", the "numbers" and "due course of things, /Which cannot in their huge and proper life/ Be here presented". Like the fourth evangelist, Shakespeare telescopes chronology and even alters it in order to relate his story with the greatest effectiveness and truthfulness.

All this should warn us against overemphasizing the historical value of a text like John 18-19. In the case of its referential truth-value, we know from its truth-claim, probability and sources that there is a general ring of truth about the incidents which the evangelist reports. However, it must never be forgotten that this same material is *geschichte* as well as *historie* - it is, to quote Ernst Haenchen, "the

re-presentation of a tradition from a definite (here: theological) point of view" as well as "a faithful report of factual occurrences"⁶¹. This means that the truthfulness of the Johannine passion narrative must not only be evaluated from an historical, referential perspective, but also from an interpretative, mimetic one. In the case of its mimetic truth-value, we can only know its truthfulness from a believing participation in the value-system of the narrative. As we saw in our introduction, Tracy has defined a classic text as one which evokes "some disclosure of reality in a moment that must be called one of "recognition" which surprises, provokes, challenges, shocks and eventually transforms us; an experience that upsets conventional opinions and expands the sense of the possible; indeed a realized experience of that which is essential, that which endures"⁶². The truthfulness of John 18-19 is experienced when, with the eyes of faith, the reader accepts the ideological viewpoint of the narrator and sees the universal meaning of the actions described in the narrative (the Shepherd who protects, the King who reigns, the Lamb who atones). It can only be with such a believing reader-response that the interpretative, mimetic dimension of this narrative is deemed truth-ful. The reader must adopt the stance of the ideal narrative audience if he/she is to experience that truth which sets us free.

CHAPTER EIGHT.

SECTION THREE. HISTORY AND TIME IN JOHN 18-19.

We began this thesis with a brief mention of one of the pioneers of NT narrative criticism, Amos Wilder⁶³, and we now close with some of his thoughts on the relationship between history, historiography and narrative. In a chapter entitled "The Story", Wilder showed how "the narrative mode is uniquely important in Christianity"⁶⁴. The grounds he gives for this judgement relate to the biblical understanding of God. As Wilder remarks, "God is an active and purposeful God and his action with and for men has a beginning, a middle and an end like any good story"; that is why "the new Christian speech inevitably took the form of a story"⁶⁵. But it is not only the historical story of the world which the new Christian speech is interested in. Christian narrative is concerned with the minutest parts within the whole, with individuals as well as nations. Thus, gospel narratives focus not only on the nation of Israel, they also focus on individual and apparently insignificant characters such as the portress in John 18.15. As Wilder puts it, "the anecdotes about each such individual and many more have their significance in the fact that they are related to the total world-story from alpha to omega"⁶⁶. It is these ordinary, everyday characters (who so fascinated Eric Auerbach) who encourage the reader to participate in the story. "They locate us in the very midst of the great story and plot of all time and space, and therefore relate us to the great dramatist and story-teller, God himself"⁶⁷.

Wilder's essay is in many ways an essay in narrative history for its central thesis is that "the world is, indeed, seen by the Christian as a history and a plot, but there are also a myriad of lesser histories within the main plot, and these sub-plots and sub-histories are real"⁶⁸.

In section two of chapter four, we showed that some philosophers of history in the last twenty years have strenuously denied that history might already possess an inherent narrativity. We quoted Hayden White's remark that narrative reconstructions of the past are "fraudulent outlines", and Louis Mink's statement that "narrative qualities are transferred from art to life"⁶⁹. We proceeded to show how Kermode's analysis of MARK's historical-referential content was influenced not only by his own radical existentialist hermeneutic but by this view that any historiography which chooses the story-form is "a narrative structure imposed upon events"⁷⁰. However, we then went on to cite Stephen Crites' view that "the formal quality of experience through time is inherently narrative", and Paul Ricoeur's belief that history already possesses "an inchoate narrativity that does not proceed from projecting...literature upon life"⁷¹. We proceeded to show that Dan Via's study in MARK's ethics had been influenced by the views of Crites and Ricoeur, just as Frank Kermode's analysis of MARK had been influenced by White's more negative philosophy of history - hence Via's belief that MARK's plotted time was not what Kermode would call an "impudent intervention" on real, historical time⁷².

In chapter four, we steered a via media between these two opposing philosophies by stating that, in the biblical understanding of history, these two views were not seen as an "either/or" but as a "both/and". As Robert Alter proposes, in Hebrew narrative historiography there is "a double dialectic between design and disorder, providence and freedom"⁷³. This means that both Kermode AND Via (along with their respective philosophical forbears) are correct. Experience, time, and history really DO offer themselves to perception as ruptured and fragmented. But with the acts of God recorded in Old Testament

narrative, and supremely with the canonical narratives of the Christ event in the NT, a profound narrativity WITHIN history breaks to the surface of an otherwise apparently fractured reality. With the Incarnation, the Alpha and Omega of history enters the meaningless middle of time which humanity inhabits, with the result that order and design at last present themselves to the eyes of faith. We then pointed to the historical understanding implicit within JOHN to support this view. We began by stressing what E.H. Askwith long ago described as "the historical value of the Fourth Gospel" (1910), and then proceeded to show how the Johannine conception of Jesus-history emphasizes the unity between historical realities and their universal significance. We suggested in that chapter that the evangelist achieves this integration by adding the phenomenon of meta-story time to the story time, real time and narrative time of his gospel - and by combining the four time-shapes of process, retrospective, barrier and polytemporal time.

In this final chapter we have sought to demonstrate the truth-value of both the referential and the mimetic dimension of St. John's passion narrative (or what scholarship has traditionally designated its history and its interpretation). On the basis of its truth claim, the plausibility of its content, and the soundness of its source, we argued that the realities to which John 18-19 refers are not the substance of the evangelist's imagination but rather items of a reliable tradition. We sought, in other words, to prove that the information in John 18-19 is, generally speaking, historical. We then argued that the Johannine interpretation of the profound and permanent meaning of these events (its mimesis) also has a considerable truth-value, and we did that by showing how the actions of Jesus at the time of his death are seen by the eyes of faith to have universal application. In the final pages

remaining to us, it is our intention briefly to show how the fourth evangelist understands his passion narrative not only the climax of his gospel, but also the climactic moment in history. To do this, we shall concentrate on those aspects of the Johannine passion narrative which give the impression of a meta-story time invading the story time of JOHN's narrative world. The two aspects in question are JOHN's fulfilment texts and his understanding of the death of Jesus as the HORA of Jesus' return to the DOXA of His Father.

C.H. Dodd has drawn attention to the "testimonial" function of OT references in John 18-19⁷⁴. These references cluster together in the narrative of the crucifixion. Four of the allusions are in quotation form, and can be found at 19.24 ("they shared my garments among them, and cast lots for my clothing"), 19.29 ("I thirst"), 19.37a ("no bone of his shall be broken"), and 19.37b ("they shall look on him whom they pierced"). Such formulae are absent in Section One (the arrest and denials) and Scene Two (the trial before Pilate). Indeed, they are absent in the main body of the Gospel, *except where Jesus' death is said to be their fulfilment* (e.g. John 2.17, 15.25). The crucifixion of Jesus therefore seems to be the direct object of these OT quotations. What, then, is their function? Dodd believes that Acts 2.23 provides the answer: "When Jesus had been given up to you, *by the delibertate will and plan of God*, you used heathen men to crucify and kill him". The function of the OT references in the Johannine crucifixion narrative is therefore to show how the tragedy of the cross is at the same time part of "the settled plan and purpose of God"⁷⁵. JOHN achieves this end by showing how nearly every aspect of Jesus' crucifixion is a fulfilment of prophecies uttered and recorded many centuries before. These fulfilment

texts create a polytemporal time-shape to the crucifixion narrative and suggest a fusion of meta-story and story time.

A key question in relation to these testimonies is as follows: "did JOHN invent passion incidents so that they would conform to these OT prophecies? Or did the evangelist see actual incidents in history as fulfilments of prophecy?" Frank Kermode's answer, somewhat predictably, is that John 18-19 is "an invention, founded on a repertory of texts brought to fulfilment by a literary narrative"⁷⁶. What we have is "a story written in such a way as to ensure pleromatic conformity with clues laid down in an earlier part of what was to be a single book"⁷⁷. Thus, the crucifixion narrative in JOHN "strikingly combines what may be called reality-effects with an ability to comply with other literary texts"⁷⁸. Dodd's answer to this kind of skepticism is that, although "it is pretty clear that in some cases a datum of the narrative has been elaborated...the scale on which this motive has acted upon the tradition is strictly limited"⁷⁹. He qualifies this judgement with the following two arguments: (1) Very few OT texts which could legitimately be described as "messianic" have actually been used as testimonies by the four evangelists. (2) Even within the passages actually cited, not every detail is alleged to have been fulfilled. These two arguments suggest to Dodd that "it was not to provide documentation for a previously formulated theology that the early Church searched the scriptures; it was to find an explanation for attested facts"⁸⁰. The extent to which this search "stimulated a legend-making tendency in primitive Christianity is strictly limited"⁸¹.

The effect which these testimonies have on our reader-response is profound. When the narrator reveals that the soldier's division of the garments, Jesus' cry of thirst, the omission of the crucifragum, and

the effusion of blood and water, are all fulfilments of prophecies made many centuries beforehand, the reader is made to sense that a divine meta-story time has brought rationality, structure and meaning to an apparently episodic story-time. Provided that the reader approaches the text with a hermeneutic of consent⁸², the effect of the fulfilment motif is to reinforce the sense of order and design within the narrative world of the gospel - and beyond that to suggest the existence of a directionality and emplotment within the real time of the reader. In this respect, Kermode is right after all when he describes the historiography of John 18-19 as "a unique way of writing history"⁸³. The testimonies from Psalm 21.19, Psalm 68.22, Psalm 33.21/Exodus 12.46 and Zechariah 12.10 all create the impression that the crucifixion of Jesus is both the greatest demonstration of human disorder and the supremest manifestation of divine providence. At the Cross the hatred, dissonance and fragmentation which characterizes human history is displayed with incomparable and unique perversity in the Killing of the King. Yet, simultaneously, the fourth evangelist discloses that the same event is the most "meant" moment in space and time, and that this death is the *dénouement* which reveals a narrativity (a story-like character) deep beneath the apparent meaninglessness of life.

This impression of the narrativity of man's time and experience is strengthened by yet another meta-story strategy of the evangelist - the particularly Johannine concept of the HORA of Jesus. The noun HORA occurs 26 times in JOHN and, according to Nicholson, in 10 of these instances it is used merely to indicate chronological time⁸⁴. On eight occasions, however, the word HORA is explicitly used to describe "the hour of Jesus" (2.4, 7.30, 8.20, 12.23, 12.27, 13.1, 17.1 - to this list I have added 19.27). The key use of HORA is in the first verse of what

Dodd calls the Book of the Passion: "It was before the Passover festival. Jesus knew that his hour had come and he must leave this world and go to the Father" (13.1). From this example, it is clear that the HORA of Jesus is the moment when Jesus returns to his Father. Is this hour of return to be equated with the crucifixion? Nicholson's study of the use of HORA in JOHN reveals that we are mistaken to confine the "hour" merely to the moment of the crucifixion²⁵. The hour of Jesus is not just the hour of his death, it is the hour of his return to the Father, in which the death plays a part. The word "hora" cannot therefore be taken literally in JOHN when it applies to the return of Jesus to the glorious presence of the Father. It must be seen as a time appointed by the Father (7.30) during which Jesus will ascend to the DOXA from which he originally descended. If the use of HORA in 19.27 alludes to this time of departure, and not literally to a moment in chronological time, then it is clear why the evangelist felt no inconsistency in reporting the BD's presence when the effusion of blood and water occurred in 19.34-5.

The two uses of the word HORA in JOHN, the one literal and chronological, the other metaphorical and transcendent, are the means by which the evangelist introduces barrier and polytemporal time-shapes into his narrative. In JOHN one senses both the ordinary, process course of time (indicated by the literal use of HORA, for example at 19.14) and a transcendent narrativity within time (indicated by the use of HORA to create a divinely appointed barrier or time-limit to the narrative). Put another way, JOHN gives us temporal coordinates which evoke a sense of story-time, and ones which evoke a sense of meta-story time. The crucifixion is the point where these two dimensions of time get focussed and integrated. Everything in JOHN points to the Cross. Indeed, the

first twelve chapters of JOHN depict a time-span of about 2½ years, whilst the story time of John 13-19 covers only one week (the HORA of Christ's return). Everything is telescoped into the supremely important event of the Cross, which reveals to the ideal reader that even the most disordered moment of human history can be seen as a dénouement of a divine emplotment within history. The factor which encourages this more than anything else is the truth that the HORA of Christ's return (which embraces the crucifixion) is an hour appointed by God Himself. All of history has been waiting for and pointing towards this moment. That is why the Cross is at the same time the conclusive proof of the world's meaninglessness (in the eyes of the unbeliever) and God's great dénouement of the narrativity of history (in the eyes of the believer). The reader must make a choice between these two perceptions. The reader cannot take Pilate's course because neutrality is impossible. A person must be born "from above" in order to see "from above".

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER EIGHT.

1. I have taken these terms from Clarence Walhout's essay, TEXTS AND ACTIONS - an essay which I referred to in chapter four. For Walhout's section on "Questions of Reference and Mimesis", see pp.49-57. Walhout distinguishes between "concrete" and "ideal" reference. Concrete reference is reference to actual objects in the empirical world. Ideal reference indicates reference to non-empirical referents of words like anger, law, triangle (p.50). When we speak of reference in this thesis, we do not distinguish between ideal and concrete reference.
2. F.Kermode, GENESIS OF SECRECY, p.102.
3. Ibid, p.105.
4. Ibid, p.105.
5. Ibid, p.102.
6. C.H.Dodd, HISTORICAL TRADITION, p.14.
7. Ibid, p.14.
8. Ibid, p.134.
9. R.E.Brown, JOHN, vol.II, p.936.
10. Of the identification of the eye-witness with the BD here, B.Lindars writes that "it is most improbable, for the Beloved Disciple has gone home in verse 27, and there is nothing in the text to indicate that he has come back again" (THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, p.589). Lindars has interpreted HORA as a statement of process time instead of a statement of polytemporal time (see pp.147ff for my discussion of these time-shapes).
11. C.H.Dodd, HISTORICAL TRADITION pp.21-151, R.E.Brown THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN VOL.II pp.785-962, R.Fuller THE PASSION, DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS ACCORDING TO ST.JOHN pp.54-56, John A.T.Robinson THE PRIORITY OF JOHN pp.238-287.
12. R.H.Strachan, THE FOURTH GOSPEL, pp.307-8 argued that Mark and Matthew both indicate that there were two stages in the Jewish trial of Jesus. The first was a preliminary hearing. Mark does not say who was in charge of this, but Matthew claims it was Caiaphas. Strachan states that it was illegal to hold a meeting at night and that Matthew and Mark have transferred some of the characteristics of the morning sanhedrin meeting to the preliminary nocturnal hearing (hence Matthew's mention of Caiaphas). Luke avoids this mistake by indicating an informal hearing *immediately after the arrest* in the high priest's house (Lk 22.54) - he does not, however, name Annas. JOHN fills in all the gaps by telling us that there was an informal, nocturnal hearing before Annas in the high priest's house before the more formal meeting with the sanhedrin. For a more recent defence of the Johannine chronology of the arrest and trial, see J.A.T.Robinson's PRIORITY, pp.238-254.

13. R.V.G.Tasker, JOHN.p.195, says of the soldiers' response to Jesus' "ego eimi" in 18.5, that Jesus has "at His command invisible divine resources in virtue of His complete obedience to His heavenly Father". It is these supernatural powers which flatten the arresting party. I agree with everything that Tasker says about Jesus, but if he is implying that John 18.5f is a literal transcript of events, then I want to know what source the evangelist has used, where it has come from, and what kind of event the narrative is based on.
14. F.F.Bruce, THE TRIAL OF JESUS, p.14. R.E.Brown, ibid,p.860, writes that "Many of the details of the trial peculiar to John's account cannot be verified but are not implausible".
15. M.Goguel, LES SOURCES DU RECIT JOHANNIQUE DE LA PASSION: "Nous trouvons d'abord quelques traditions anciennes indépendantes du récit synoptique, mais qui peuvent avoir été en contact avec la source du récit de Marc, puis un certain nombre de récits empruntés aux synoptiques mais ayant subi une certaine élaboration avant d'entrer dans le récit johannique, enfin quelques morceaux qui doivent être attribués au rédacteur de l'évangile", p.104.
16. C.H.Dodd, HISTORICAL TRADITION, p.21.
17. Ibid, p.21.
18. E.Trocme, THE PASSION AS LITURGY, p.81.
19. R.E.Brown, JOHN,vol.II, p.787.
20. Ibid, p.788.
21. Cited from R.Kysar's FOURTH EVANGELIST AND HIS GOSPEL. p.27.
22. R.Fortna, THE GOSPEL OF SIGNS, pp.242-4.
23. Ibid, p.129.
24. P.Borgen, JOHN AND THE SYNOPTICS IN THE PASSION NARRATIVE, p.259.
25. This discussion is an elaboration of the brief comments made by R.E.Brown, JOHN,VOL.II, p.915.
26. Ibid, p.787, though Brown (ibid.p.914) notes that John's passion source is nearer to the Marcan A source as understood by Bultmann, not Taylor.
27. J.M.Boice, WITNESS AND REVELATION IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, Michigan, Zondervan, 1970. p.127.
28. R.E.Brown, ibid, pp.791.
29. C.H.Dodd, HISTORICAL TRADITION IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.21.
30. Quoted by R.H.Strachan, ibid, p.306. Strachan interprets the action of the soldiers as "a recoil in fear before the moral ascendancy of Jesus".

Marcus Dods, *ibid* p.264, reconstructs the original scene as follows: "Even in the dim and flickering light of the torches there was that in His appearance which made it impossible for the bluntest and rudest soldier to lay a hand upon Him. Discipline was forgotten; the legionaries who had thrown themselves on spear-points unawed by the fiercest of foes saw in this unarmed figure something which quelled and bewildered them". All we can say is that the fourth evangelist has seen in his source evidence of Jesus' boldness at the time of his arrest - possibly also some reference to hesitancy on the part of the arresting party. The evangelist has used this incident to emphasize Jesus' divine power. He first of all has Jesus identify himself using the revelatory "I AM", and secondly portrays the hesitancy of the soldiers as the kind of reaction befitting a theophany (see Dan.10.9). The evangelist has brought a mimetic truth out of historical data - the truth that "Jesus is above all earthly power" (Lindars, *ibid*, p.541).

31. J.Armitage Robinson, HISTORICAL CHARACTER OF ST.JOHN'S GOSPEL, p.15.

32. *Ibid*, p.16.

33. J.M.Smith, JOHANNINE CHRISTIANITY, p.184.

34. *Ibid*, p.185.

35. *Ibid*, p.185.

36. *Ibid*, p.184.

37. *Ibid*, p.187.

38. *Ibid*, p.20.

39. See B.Schwank's DIE ERSTEN GABEN DES ERHOHTEN KONIGS (19, 23-30) in *SeinSend* 29, 1964, pp.292-309. Schwank argues that the main events of the crucifixion - the adoption scenario, the giving up of the spirit - are symbolic of the gifts which the enthroned king gives to his subjects.

40. The phrase "passover plot" derives from Hugh J.Schonfield's THE PASSOVER PLOT (1966) in which he argues that Jesus plotted his crucifixion and resurrection (plotted understood here to mean "stage-managed"). This is of course an absurd thesis and our use of the phrase is not meant to suggest any allegiance to Schonfield's eccentric and unscientific approach. If anyone has a "passover plot", it is the fourth evangelist.

41. R.E.Brown writes, "in our judgement, the textual support for *hyssos* is forbiddingly weak, and we are almost certainly dealing with a scribe's ingenious attempt to improve a difficult reading" (*Ibid*, p.909).

42. R.H.Strachan, *Ibid*. p.320. "Hyssop is not a plant which could provide a stalk long enough or stout enough for the purpose".

43. R.E.Brown, *Ibid*, p.909.

44. *Ibid*, p.930.

45. 19.36 is a combination of two texts, one concerning God's protection of the righteous man (Ps 34.20) and the other concerning the ritual of preparing the Passover lamb (Ex 12.46/Numbers 9.12).

46. W.Wilkens, in his *DIE ENTSTEHUNGSGESCHICHTE DES VIERTEN EVANGELIUMS* (Zollikon: Evangelischer Verlag 1958), and subsequently in *EVANGELIST UND TRADITION IM JOHANNESVANGELIUM* (Theologische Zeitschrift, 16. 1960, 81-90) proposed the following theory of JOHN's composition: J1 = the BD's composition of a gospel of signs, including a Galilean signs ministry, a Judaeen signs ministry and the passion. J11 = a redaction of this basic gospel in which the material is left more or less intact but in which discourse material is successfully integrated into the narrative. J111 = a final editing in which a Passover framework and paschal themes were imposed on the gospel. This framework is built around allusions to the Passover festival in 2.13, 6.4 and 11.55. I agree with Wilkens' hypothesis at most points, except that I believe the passover chronology is a reflection of the historical ministry of Jesus and therefore a feature of the basic gospel in J1, that the evangelist is principally responsible for the evocation of this passover plot in JOHN at J11, and that the final redactor's intrusions on the evangelist's narrative are a good deal less extensive than Wilkens argues (J111).

47. J.K.Howard, *PASSOVER AND EUCHARIST IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL*, p.330.

48. L.Morris, *THE NEW TESTAMENT AND THE JEWISH LECTIONARIES*, p.72.

49. J.K.Howard, *ibid*, p.337.

50. *Ibid*, p.337.

51. A.Jaubert, *THE CALENDAR OF QUMRAN AND THE PASSION NARRATIVE*, p.63.

52. Jaubert begins by wondering why JOHN sees significance in the fact that Christ appeared eight days after the resurrection Sunday (20.26). This weeks after Passover had no special significance in the traditional Jewish calendar. Jaubert claims that the evangelist was following the Zadokite calendar at Qumran, in which the day after the sabbath following the week of unleavened bread was the first day of the season of Pentecost (pp.64-65).

53. L.Morris, *ibid*, p.70.

54. *Ibid*, p.69.

55. F.Mussner, *THE HISTORICAL JESUS IN THE GOSPEL OF ST.JOHN*, pp.18f.

56. *Ibid*, p.57.

57. *Ibid*, p.45.

58. C.Valhout, *TEXTS AND ACTIONS*, p.56. "When Aristotle described literature (art) as an imitation of an action, he was not implying a relationship between language and actual states of affairs. Instead, he held that the particular events depicted by the language of a text exhibit

a structural pattern which in turn exemplifies an ideal or universal pattern of action."

59. R.M.Frye, A LITERARY PERSPECTIVE FOR THE CRITICISM OF THE GOSPELS, pp.206f forms the basis of this discussion. Frye calls the gospels "dramatic history" and likens them to Shakespeare's history plays.

60. Ibid, p.208.

61. E.Haenchen, HISTORY AND INTERPRETATION IN THE JOHANNINE PASSION NARRATIVE, p.198.

62. D.Tracy, ANALOGICAL IMAGINATION, p.108.

63. See p.2.

64. A.Wilder, EARLY CHRISTIAN RHETORIC, p.64.

65. Ibid, pp.64-5.

66. Ibid, p.65.

67. Ibid, p.65.

68. Ibid, p.66.

69. See p.94 of this thesis.

70. See p.91.

71. See p.94.

72. See p.91.

73. Robert Alter, SACRED HISTORY AND PROSE FICTION, p.14.

74. C.H.Dodd, HISTORICAL TRADITION, pp.31f.

75. Ibid, p.31.

76. F.Kermode, GENESIS OF SECRECY, p.105.

77. Ibid, p.106.

78. Ibid, p.105.

79. C.H.Dodd, HISTORICAL TRADITION, p.47.

80. Ibid, p.49.

81. Ibid, p.49.

82. P.Stuhlmacher, HISTORICAL CRITICISM & THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE. pp.83f.

83. F.Kermode, GENESIS OF SECRECY, p.107.
84. G.Nicholson, DEATH AS DEPARTURE, p.147.
85. Ibid, pp.147-8.

CONCLUSION.

In this thesis I have constructed a method of analyzing the gospel of John as narrative Christology. The method I have used is "narrative criticism"; one which gives priority to the final form of a narrative and which aims to evaluate its artistry. As it has turned out, this method has not really resembled the methods of other narrative critics of the NT because it is more integrative than they. In my programme the new is integrated with the old, the new text-immanent bias of literary criticism with the old diachronic bias of historical criticism. The way in which I have managed to marry these two unlikely bed-fellows is by exposing the historical and sociological dimensions of the narrative form. I have demonstrated how recent narrative criticism, by advocating an a-historical approach which ignores both the history of Jesus and the history of Christian communities, has completely missed the significance of the narrative form for historians seeking a followable account of the past, and for social groups seeking a sense of purposeful identity. By including historical and sociological questions, I have not only embraced the concerns of traditional methods of biblical criticism, I have at the same time redefined the questions which those methods ask; for in my programme, historical criticism now looks at questions of reference and temporality, whilst form and redaction criticism now looks at the relationship between narrative poetics and community values.

It seems very likely to me that present and future narrative studies of the Gospels will continue to employ a largely a-historical methodology unless the critique contained within this work is borne in mind. The two most recent literary studies of JOHN show no signs of moving away from a purely text-immanent strategy. George Mlakuzhyil's

CHRISTOCENTRIC LITERARY STRUCTURE OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL (1987) looks at the dramatic-literary surface structure of the fourth gospel. In order to achieve his results, Mlakuzhyil ignores the questions of source criticism and noticeably plays down the number of aporias in JOHN. Ignoring questions of authorship, redaction and textual prehistory, Mlakuzhyil treats JOHN as a literary whole. The dramatic structure he discovers is discerned using literary, dramatic and structural criteria, and his conclusion is that JOHN is a five act drama - something which F.R.Hitchcock and others have contended throughout this century. The second work, Jeff Staley's rhetorical investigation of the implied reader in JOHN (THE PRINT'S FIRST KISS: 1988), likewise looks at JOHN from a synchronic rather than a diachronic perspective. Staley is not interested in the communication between the author of JOHN and his original readers (the Johannine community). Rather, he is concerned with the interaction in the present between real author and real reader, between implied author and implied reader, and between narrator and narratee. Using a communication theory of narrative, Staley endeavours to explain how the text of JOHN actual forms and victimizes an implied reader. Like Mlakuzhyil, Staley fails to ask what sociological function Johannine narratives might have had, or whether such followable accounts of the past are based on sound, historical sources.

This thesis has therefore contributed something new and timely to the area of methodology. It has also, I believe, contributed new insights into the narrative of the fourth gospel. My whole emphasis on the gospel of John as *narrative Christology* is one which I believe Johannine scholarship could find useful. The evangelist confesses that his aim is a rhetorical and a Christological one in 20.31, and in the light of that it seems to me only proper that Johannine research should now be addressing itself to an analysis of those narrative strategies by which that aim is achieved. It is

for this reason that I began my narrative analysis of John 18-19 (see chapter 5) with a careful examination of the artistic devices employed by the evangelist to bring the ideal reader to a correct understanding of Jesus. I showed in section one of chapter five how the evangelist employs shepherd-imagery from John 10 in his depiction of the arrest of Jesus and the denials of Peter. His rhetorical purpose in this was to create an ironic portrait in which Jesus is depicted as the Good Shepherd and Peter as the hireling. In section two I showed how the evangelist describes the trial of Jesus so as to bring out Jesus' kingship, and in section three I showed how he employs paschal metaphors to evoke the sacrificial character of Jesus' death. In chapter five, in other words, I sought to demonstrate from the text of the Johannine narrative how the fourth evangelist has skillfully constructed a persuasive narrative Christology in which the person of Jesus is characterized from different angles - Good Shepherd, Suffering King, Paschal Lamb.

In chapter six I threw new light on the way in which the fourth evangelist exploits the theme of the kingship of Jesus in John 18-19 by basing his plot-structure on the tragic mythos - a "deep structure" traditionally associated with the killing of kings and with expiatory sacrifice. In this chapter I revealed how structuralist narratology can greatly illuminate how we should read the Johannine passion narrative. I showed how the evangelist has consciously or unconsciously incarnated a story paradigm which derives from a mythos centred upon the sacrificial death of a divine king-figure. In this way I was able to go some way towards explaining the aesthetic potency of the fourth evangelist's narrative Christology in John 18-19. Many commentators point out that kingship is as strong a Christological theme in JOHN's passion narrative as it is in MARK's. But none of the secondary literature on John 18-19 has

ever attempted from a literary critical perspective to justify this impression that John 18-19 focusses upon the killing of a divine king-figure. By revealing the generic roots of such a story in the mythos of tragedy - a mythos deeply embedded in the mind of the evangelist and in the collective unconscious of his social group - I was able to disclose the source from which JOHN's narrative Christology was generated. That source is in Jesus-history first and foremost, but it is also in the mind of the evangelist - which perceived Jesus-history as an infiguration of the archetypal tragic story.

In chapter seven, I went beyond present-day reader-response criticism of JOHN's narrative Christology to ask how the original readers of John 18-19 might have responded to this story of the death of Jesus. I homed in on that easily missed narrative pericope in John 19.25-27 in which Jesus adopts the BD into his earthly family at the hour of his death. I showed how powerful the adoption metaphor must have been to Johannine readers whose community was derived from the founding figure of the beloved disciple and I argued that the liturgical repetition of this adoption scenario would have provided a sense of homecoming to a community separated from the children of Abraham and from their own families. In other words, in chapter seven I explored how this narrative Christology might have been interpreted and received in its original Sitz im Leben. The importance of this chapter consists in the fact that I went much further than Robert Tannehill in his examination of the narrative Christology of MARK because I wanted to ask what *function* such a narrative Christology might have had in its original social milieu. Tannehill and others are content merely to highlight the way in which the second evangelist has created a narrative Christology - a story centred upon Jesus and advocating a particular credo using narrative and rhetorical strategies. In this work, I have argued that

the narrative form is employed by communities for certain sociological purposes (the incarnation of community values, the creation of social cohesion, etc). Therefore I have not been content merely to look at JOHN at a synchronic level. I have tried to go further and ask what *function* JOHN's narrative Christology had in its original context.

Finally, in chapter eight, I addressed myself to the question: "Is this narrative Christology true?" In this chapter, I tried to show how the evangelist constructed a narrative mimesis of the death of Jesus, and not just a window onto the actual events surrounding the crucifixion. I explained that "mimesis" is not to be understood as an exact copy of history but as the imitation of an action which has universal and paradigmatic significance. In the case of John 18-19, I showed how these paradigmatic actions are the Shepherd who protects, the King who reigns and the Lamb who atones, and that these actions are deemed truthful provided that they are perceived by a reader who shares the same ideological stance as the author. My conclusion in this chapter was that John 18-19 is true because it is on the one hand based on solid historical tradition, and because on the other hand, it discloses metahistorical dimensions to the crucifixion through rhetorical strategies which evoke a sense of divine emplotment within historical events. This is a new approach to the question of "historicity". The historical critic has traditionally judged the truthfulness of John 18-19 on the basis of textual criticism, historical tradition, history of religions, and evidence of redaction/interpolation. The literary critic on the other hand has judged the truthfulness of such a story on the basis of whether it moves us to see reality with new eyes. In this thesis I have combined both literary and historical concerns in my examination of the truthfulness of JOHN's narrative Christology.

If there is one direction a work like this ought to take now it is in the whole area of the relationship between the "revelatory" nature of the Bible and its narrative form. Two writers have already been working in precisely this area: Gail O'Day and Paul Ricoeur. Gail O'Day has examined the relationship between narrative mode and theological claim in JOHN in her book, REVELATION IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL (1986). In particular, she has looked at the way irony (narrative mode) is used as a device enabling the narrative to function as "the revealed and revealing word of God" (theological claim) ¹. Paul Ricoeur, in a little quoted but profound essay called TOWARD A HERMENEUTIC OF THE IDEA OF REVELATION (1977), has looked at the revelatory nature of poetic language and the way in which these linguistic resources are employed in biblical narrative historiography. Ricoeur's hermeneutic of revelation is based on his belief that "the revelatory function...is coextensive with the poetic function"². In TIME AND NARRATIVE Ricoeur develops these thoughts (without reference to the Bible) by arguing that of all narrative modes it is "emplotment" which is most responsible for the revelatory power of narrative, because emplotment originates from the same mental operations which produce metaphor³. No one has yet attempted to apply Ricoeur's insights to the fourth gospel, but it is my belief Ricoeur has paved the way towards an exciting study into the way in which the narrative form contributes towards the disclosing power of the Bible. With Ricoeur's help, narrative criticism of the NT can begin to assess the "classic" status of NT narrative. This must be the next step - to examine JOHN not only as a functional and historical, narrative Christology, but also and above all as divine revelation through the narrative form.

FOOTNOTES TO CONCLUSION.

1. G.R.O'Day, REVELATION IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL, p.1.
2. P.Ricoeur, TOWARD A HERMENEUTIC OF THE IDEA OF REVELATION, p.25.
3. P.Ricoeur, TIME AND NARRATIVE, VOL. I, pp.ix-xi.

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PRINCIPAL ABBREVIATIONS.

BS.....	Bibliotheca Sacra.
BTB.....	Biblical Theology Bulletin
BZ.....	Biblische Zeitschrift
CBQ.....	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
ETL.....	Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses
ExpT.....	Expository Times
HTR.....	Harvard Theological Review
JAAR.....	Journal of the American Academy of Religion
JBL.....	Journal of Biblical Literature
JR.....	Journal of Religion
JSNT.....	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JSOT.....	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
NeoT.....	Neotestamentica
NovT.....	Novum Testamentum
NTS.....	New Testament Studies
ProcIrBibAss.....	Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association
SBL.....	Society of Biblical Literature
SeinSend.....	Sein und Sendung
SJT.....	Scottish Journal of Theology
TheolTod.....	Theology Today.

